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SOME REMARKS ON GULLS

WITH A FOOT-NOTE ON A FISH

By Henry van Dyke

ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. E. SCHOONOVER AND FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY HERBERT K. JOB

I

CITY GULLS

THE current estimate of the sea-gull as an intellectual force is compressed into the word "gullibility"—a verbal monument of contempt. But when we think how many things the gull does that we cannot do—how he has mastered the arts of flying and floating, so that he is equally at home in the air and on the water; how cleverly he adapts himself to his environment, keeping warm among the ice-floes in winter and cool when all the rest of the folks at the summer watering-places are sweltering in the heat; how well he holds his own against the encroachments of that grasping animal, man, who has driven so many other wild creatures against the wall, and over it into extinction; how prudently he accepts and utilizes all the devices of civilization which suit him, (such as steamship lanes across the Atlantic, and dumping-scows in city harbors, and fish-oil factories on the seashore), without becoming in the least civilized himself—in short, when we consider how he succeeds in doing what every wise person is trying to do, living his own proper life amid various and changing circumstances, it seems as if we might well reform the spelling of that supercilious word, and write it "gullability."

But probably the gull would show no more relish for the compliment than he has hitherto shown distaste for the innuendo; both of them being inedible, and he of a happy disposition, indifferent to purely academic opinions of his rank and station in the universe. Imagine a gull being disquieted because some naturalist solemnly averred that a hawk or a swallow was a better master of the art of flight; or a mocking-bird falling into a mood of fierce resentment or nervous depression because some professor of music declared that the hermit thrush had a more spontaneous and inspired song! The gull goes a-flying in his own way and the mocking-bird sits a-singing his roundelay, original or imitated, just as it comes to him; and neither of them is angry or depressed when a critic makes odious comparisons, because they are both doing the best that they know with "a whole and happy heart." Not so with poets, orators, and other human professors of the high-flying and cantatory arts. They are often perturbed and acerbated, and sometimes diverted from their proper course by the winds of adverse comments.

When Cicero Tomlinson began his career as a public speaker he showed a very pretty vein of humor, which served to open his hearers' minds with honest laughter to receive his plain and forcible arguments. But someone remarked that his speaking lacked dignity and weight; so he loaded himself with the works of Edmund Burke; and now he discusses the smallest subject with a depressing ponderosity. The charm of Alfred Tennyson Starling's early lyrics was unmis-

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takable. But in an evil day a newspaper announced that his poetry smelled of the lamp and was deficient in virility. Alfred took it painfully to heart, and fell into a violent state of Whitmania. Have you seen his patient imitations of the long-lined, tumultuous one?

After all, the surest way to be artificial is to try to be natural according to some other man's recipe.

One reason why the wild children of nature attract our eyes, and give us an inward, subtle satisfaction in watching them, is because they seem so confident that their own way of doing things is, for them at least, the best way. They let themselves go, on the air, in the water, over the hills, among the trees, and do not ask for admiration or correction from people who are differently built. The sea-gulls flying over a busy port of commerce, or floating at ease on the discolored, choppy, churned-up waves of some great river,

> Bordered by cities, and hoarse
> With a thousand cries,

are unconscious symbols of nature's self-reliance and content with her ancient methods. Not a whit have they changed their manner of flight, their comfortable, rocking-chair seat upon the water, their creaking, eager voice of hunger and excitement, since the days when the port was a haven of solitude, and the river was crossed only by the red man's canoe passing from forest to forest. They are untroubled by the fluctuations of trade, the calms and tempests which afflict the stock market, the hot waves and cold waves of politics. They do not fash themselves about the fashions—except, perhaps, that silly and barbarous one of adorning the headgear of women with the remains of dead gulls. They do not ask whether life is worth living, but launch themselves boldly upon the supposition that it is, and seem to find it interesting, various, and highly enjoyable, even among wharves, steamboats, and factory chimneys.

My first acquaintance with these untamed visitors of the metropolis was

> When that I was a littel tine boy,

and lived on the Heights of Brooklyn. A nurse, whose hateful official relation was mitigated by many amiable personal qualities—she was a rosy Irish girl—had the happy idea of going, now and then, for a "day off" and a breath of fresh air, on one of the ferry-boats that ply the waters of Manhattan. Sometimes she took one of the ordinary ferries that went straight over to New York and back again; but more often she chose a boat that proposed a longer and more adventurous voyage—to Hoboken, or Hunter's Point, or Staten Island. We would make the trip to and fro several times, but Biddy never paid, so far as my memory goes, more than one fare. By what arrangement or influence she made the deck-hands considerately blind to this repetition of the journey, without money and without price, I neither knew nor cared, being altogether engaged with playing about the deck and admiring the wonders of the vasty deep.

The other boats were wonderful, especially the big sailing-ships, which were far more numerous then than they are now. The steam tugs, with their bluff, pushing, hasty manners, were very attractive, and I wondered why all of them had a gilt eagle on top of the wheel-house. A little row-boat, tossing along the edge of the wharves, or pushing out bravely for Governor's Island, seemed to be full of perilous adventure. But most wonderful of all were the sea-gulls, flying and floating all over the East River and the North River and the bay.

Where did they come from? It was easy to see where they got their living; they were "snappers-up of unconsidered trifles" from every passing vessel whose cabin-boy threw the rubbish overboard. If you could succeed in getting off the peel of an orange in two or three big pieces, or if you could persuade yourself to leave a reasonably large core of an apple, or, best of all, if you had the limp skin of a yellow banana, you cast the forbidden fruit into the water, and saw how quickly one of the gulls would pick it up, and how beautifully the others would fight him for it. Evidently gulls have a wider range of diet than little boys; also they have never been told that it is wrong to fight.

'How greedy they are! What makes some of them white and some of them gray? They must be different kinds; or else the gray ones are the father and mother gulls. But if that is so, it is funny that the white ones are the best fliers and seem able to take things away from the gray ones. How would you like to fly like that? They swoop around and go just where they want to.

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Perhaps that is the way the angels fly; only of course the angels are much larger, and very much more particular about what they eat. Isn't it queer that all the gulls have eyes just alike—black and shiny and round, just like little shoe-buttons? How funnily they swim! They sit right down on the water as if it wasn't wet. Don't you wish you could do that? Look how they tuck up their pinky feet under them when they fly, and how they turn their heads from side to side, looking for something good to eat. See, there's a great big flock all together in the water, over yonder, must be a thousand hundred. Now they all fly up at once, like when you tear a newspaper into little scraps and throw a handful out of the window. Where do you suppose they go at night? Perhaps they sleep on the water. That must be fun! Do they have gulls in Ireland, Biddy, and are all their eyes black and shiny?'

"Sure!" says Biddy. "An' they do be a hundred toimes bigger an' foiner than these wans. The feathers o' thim shoines in the sun loike silver and gowld, an' their eyes is loike jools, an' they do be floying fasther then the ships can sail. If ye was only seein' some o' thim rale Oirish gulls, ye'd think no more o' these little wans!"

This increases your determination to go to the marvellous green island some day; but it does not in the least diminish your admiration for the gulls of Manhattan. In the summer, when you go to the seaside and watch the

> Gray spirits of the sea and of the shore

sailing over the white beach or floating on the blue waves of the unsullied ocean, you wonder whether these country gulls are happier than the city gulls. That they are different you are sure, and also that they must have less variety in their diet, hardly any banana-skins and orange-peel at all. But then they have more fish, and probably more fun in catching them.

These are memories of old times—the ancient days before the Great Invasion of the English Sparrows—the good old days when orioles and robins still built their nests in Brooklyn trees, and Brooklyn streets still resounded to the musical cries of the hucksters: "Radishees! *new* radishees!" or "Ole clo' an' bottles! any *ole* clo' to sell!" or "Shad O! *fre-e-sh* shad!" In that golden age we played football around the old farmhouse on Montague Terrace, coasted down the hill to Fulton Ferry, and made an occasional expedition to Manhattan to observe the strange wigwams and wild goats of the tribe of squatters who inhabited the rocky country south of the newly discovered Central Park. *Eheu fugaces!*

There was a long interval of years after that when the sea-gulls of the harbor did not especially interest me. But now again, of late, I have begun to find delight in them. Conscience, awakened by responsibility, no longer permits those surreptitiously repeated voyages without a repeated fare. But I go through the gate at the end of each voyage, and consider twelve cents a reasonable price for the pleasure of travelling up and down the North River for an hour and watching the city gulls in their winter holiday.

I know a little more about them now. They are almost all herring gulls, although occasionally a stray bird of another species may be seen. The dark-gray ones are the young. They grow lighter and more innocent-looking as they grow older, until they are pure white, except the back and the top of the wings, which are of the softest pearl gray. The head and neck, in winter, are delicately pencilled with dusky lines. The bill is bright yellow and rather long, with the upper part curved and slightly hooked, for a good hold on slippery little fish. The foot has three long toes in front and a foolish little short one behind. The web between the front toes goes down to the tips; but it makes only a small paddle, after all, and when it comes to swimming, the loon and the duck and several other birds can easily distance the gull. It is as a floater that he excels in water sports; he rides the waves more lightly and gracefully than any other creature.

> The gull, high floating like a sloop unladen
> Lets the loose water waft him as it will;
> The duck, round-breasted as a rustic maiden,
> Paddles and plunges, busy, busy, still.

But it is when the gull rises into the air, where, indeed, he seems to spend most of his time, that you perceive the perfection of his design as a master of motion. The spread of his wings is more than twice the length of his body, and every feather of those long, silvery-pearly, crescent fans seems instinct with the passion and the skill of flight. He rises and falls without an effort; he swings

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and turns from side to side with balancing motions like a skater; he hangs suspended in the air immovable as if he were held there by some secret force of levitation; he dives suddenly head foremost and skims along the water, feet dangling and wings flapping, to snatch a bit of food from the surface with his crooked golden bill. If the morsel is too large for him to swallow, look how quickly three or four other gulls will follow him, trying to take it away. How he turns and twists and dodges, and how cleverly they head him off and hang on his airy trail, like winged hounds, giving tongue with thin and querulous voices, half laughing and half crying and altogether hungry. He cannot say a word, for his mouth is full. He gulps hastily at his booty, trying to get it down before the others catch him. But it is too big for his gullet, and he drops it in the very act and article of happy deglutition. The largest and whitest of his pursuers scoops up the morsel almost before it touches the waves, and flaps away to enjoy his piratical success in some quiet retreat.

What a variety of cooking the gulls enjoy from the steamships and sailing-vessels of various nationalities which visit Manhattan! French cooks, Italian, German, Spanish, English, Swedish—cooks of all races minister to their appetites. Whenever a panful of scraps is thrown out from the galley, a flock of gulls may be seen fluttering over their fluent *table d'hôte*. Their shrill, quavering cries of joy and expectancy sound as if the machinery of their emotions were worked by rusty pulleys; their sharp eyes glisten, and their great wings flap and whirl together in a confusion of white and gray. It is said that they do useful service as scavengers of the harbor. No doubt; but to me they commend themselves chiefly as visible embodiments and revelations of the mystery, wonder, and gladness of flight.

What do we know about it, after all? We call this long-winged fellow *Larus argentatus smithsonianus*. We find that his normal temperature is about two degrees higher than ours, and that he breathes faster, and that his bones are lighter, and that his body is full of air-sacs, fitting him to fly. But how does he do it? How does he poise himself on an invisible ledge of air,

> Motionless as a cloud . . .
> That heareth not the loud winds when they call,
> And moveth altogether if it move at all?

How does he sail after a ship, with wings outspread, against the wind, never seeming to move a feather? You understand how a kite mounts upon the breeze: the string holds it from going back, so it must go up. But where is the string that holds the gull?

I like these city gulls because they come to us in winter, when the gypsy part of our nature is most in need of comforting reminders that the world is not yet entirely dead or civilized. A man that I know once wrote a poem about them, and sent it to a magazine. It was so evidently an out-of-door poem that the editor put it in the midsummer number, when you might cross the ferry a hundred times without seeing a single gull. They do not begin to come to town until October; and it is well on into November before their social season begins. In March and April they begin to flit again, and by May they are all away northward, to the inland lakes among the mountains, or to the rocky islands of the Maine coast. Let us follow them.

II

A GULL PARADISE

In the waters south of Cape Cod, where blue-fish and other gamy surface swimmers are found, the gulls are often useful guides to the fisherman. When he sees a great flock of them fluttering over the water, he suspects that the objects of his pursuit are there, feeding from below on the squid, the shiners, or the skip-jack, on which the gulls are feeding from above. So the fisherman sails as fast as possible in that direction, wishing to drag his trolls through the school of fish while they are still hungry. But in the colder waters around the island of Mount Desert, where the blue-fish have not come and the mackerel have gone away, the sign of the fluttering gulls does not indicate fish to be caught, but fish which have already been caught, and which some other fisherman is preparing for the market as he hurries home. The gulls follow his boat and clean up the waves behind it. They are commentators now, not prophets.

In these blue and frigid deeps the real sport of angling is unknown. There is instead a rather childish, but amusing game of salt-water grab-bag. You let down a heavy lump of lead and two big hooks baited

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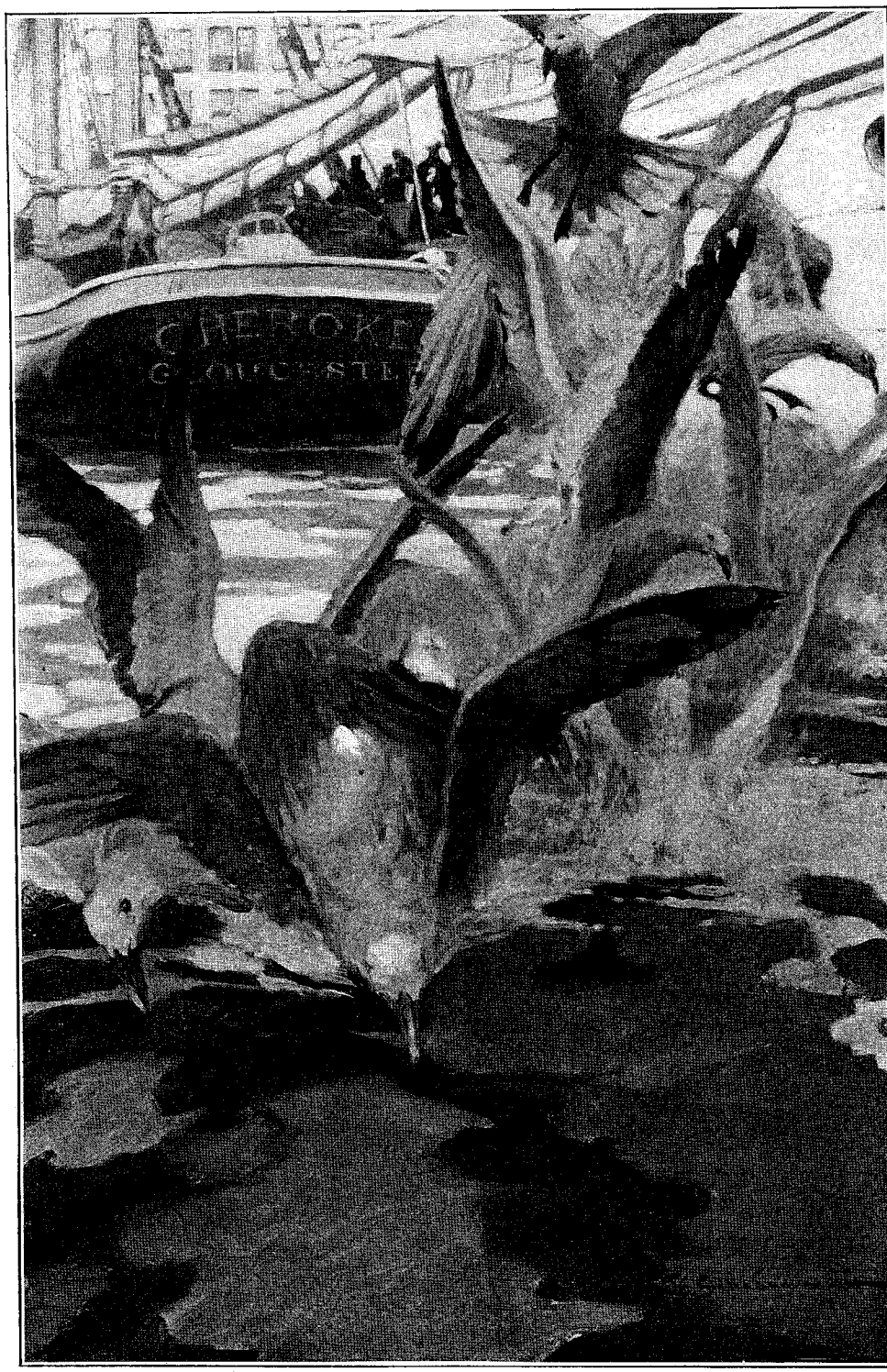

Drawn by F. E. Schoonover.

What a variety of cooking the gulls enjoy!—Page 132.

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with clams into thirty, forty, or sixty feet of water. Then you wait until something nudges the line, or until you suspect that the hooks are bare. Then you give the line a quick jerk, and pull in, hand over hand, with more or less resistance, and see what you have drawn from the grab-bag. It may be a silly, but nutritious cod, gaping in surprise at this curious termination of his involuntary rise in the world; or a silvery haddock, staring at you with round, reproachful eyes; or a pollock, handsome but worthless; or a shiny, writhing dog-fish, whose villainy is written in every line of his degenerate, chinless face. It may be that spiny gargoyle of the sea, a sculpin; or a soft and stupid hake from the mud-flats. It may be any one of the grotesque products of Neptune's vegetable garden, a sea-cucumber, a sea-carrot, or a sea-cabbage. Or it may be nothing at all. When you have made your grab, and deposited the result, if it be edible, in the barrel which stands in the middle of the boat, you try another grab, and that's the whole story.

It is astonishing how much amusement apparently sane men can get out of such a simple game as this. The interest lies, first, in the united effort to fill the barrel, and second, in the rivalry among the fishermen as to which of them shall take in the largest cod or the greatest number of haddock, these being regarded as prize packages. The sculpin and the sea vegetables may be compared to comic valentines, which expose the recipient to ridicule. The dog-fish are like tax notices and assessments; the man who gets one of them gets less than nothing, for they count against the catcher. It is quite as much a game of chance as politics or poker. You do not know on which side of the boat the good fish are hidden. You cannot tell the difference between the nibble of a cod and the bite of a dog-fish. You have no idea what is coming to you, until you have hauled in almost all of your line and caught sight of your allotment wriggling and whirling in the blue water. Sometimes you get twins.

The barrel is nearly full. Let us stop fishing and drifting. Hoist the jib, and trim in the main-sheet. The boat ceases to rock lazily on the tide. The life of the wind enters into her, and she begins to step over the waves and to cut through them, sending bright showers of spray from her bow, and leaving a swirling, bubbling, foaming wake astern. Were there ever waters so blue, or woods so green, or rocky shores so boldly and variously cut, or mountains so clear in outline and so jewel-like in shifting colors, as these of Mount Desert? Was there ever an air which held a stronger, sweeter cordial, fragrant with blended odors of the forest and the sea, soothing, exhilarating, and life-renewing?

Here is the place to see it all, and to drain the full cup of delight; not a standpoint, but a sailing-line, just beyond Baker's Island: a voyager's field of vision, shifting, changing, unfolding, as new bays and islands come into view, and new peaks arise, and new valleys open in the line of emerald and amethyst and carnelian and tourmaline hills. You can count all the summits: Newport, and Green, and Pemetic, and Sargent, and Brown, and Dog, and Western. The lesser hills, the Bubbles, Bald Mountain, Flying Mountain, and the rest, detach themselves one after another and stand out from their background of green and gray. How rosy the cliffs of Otter and Seal Harbor glow in the sunlight! How magically the great white flower of foam expands and closes on the sapphire water as the long waves, one by one, pass over the top of the big rock between us and Islesford! This is a bird's-eye view: not a high-flying bird, circling away up in the sky, or perched upon some lofty crag, as Tennyson describes the eagle:

> Close to the sun in lonely lands,
> Ringed with the azure world he stands;
> The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls,
> He watches from his mountain-walls;

but a to-and-fro-travelling bird, keeping close to sea and shore. It is a gull's-eye view — just as the flocks of herring gulls see it every day, passing back and forth from their seaward nesting-place to their favorite feeding-ground at Bar Harbor. There they go now, flapping southward with the breeze. We will go with them to their island home, and eat our dinner while they are digesting theirs.

Great and Little Duck Islands lie about ten miles off shore from Seal Harbor. Their name suggests that they were once the haunt of various kinds of sea-fowl. But the ducks have been almost, if not quite, exterminated; and the herring gulls would probably have gone the same way, but for the exertions of

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The gull goes a-flying in his own way.—Page 129.

the Audubon Society, which have resulted in the reservation of the islands as a breeding-ground under governmental protection. It has taken a long time to awaken the American people to the fact that the wild and beautiful creatures of earth and air and sea are a precious part of the common inheritance, and that their needless and heedless destruction, by pot-hunters or plume-hunters or silly shooters who are not happy unless they are destroying something, is a crime against the commonwealth which must be punished or prevented. The people are not yet wide awake, but they are beginning to get their eyes open; and the State of Maine, which was once the Butchers' Happy Hunting Ground, is now a leader in the enactment and enforcement of good game laws.

There is only one place on the shore of Great Duck where you can land comfortably when the wind has any northing in it, and that is a little cove among the rocks, below a fisherman's shanty, on the lower end of the island. Here there are a few cleared acres; some low stone walls dividing abandoned fields; the cellar of a vanished house, and a ruined fireplace and chimney; a little enclosure, overgrown with bushes and weeds, marking a lonely, forgotten burial-ground.

There are few gulls to be seen at this end of the island; it is a tranquil, forsaken place where we can sit beside our fire of driftwood and eat our broiled fish and bread, and smoke an after-dinner pipe of peace. A grassy foot-path leads down the fields, and across a salt-meadow, and along a high sea-wall of rocks and pebbles cast up by the storms, and so by a rude wood-road through a forest of spruce-trees to the higher part of the island. It rises perhaps a hundred feet

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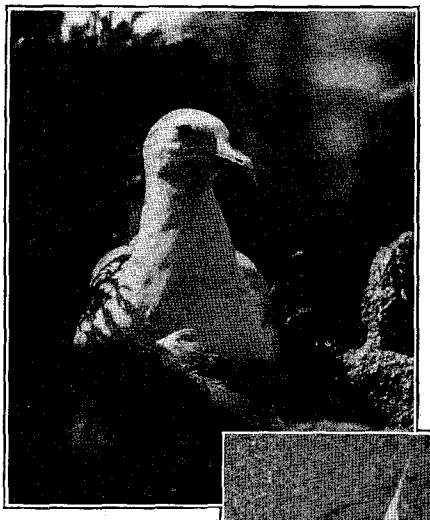
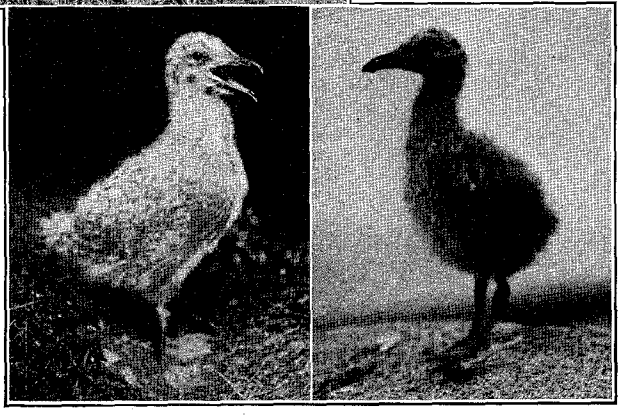


The gulls' nests are hidden away among this gray *débris*, or in crevices among the rocks.

or more above the sea, with a steep shore built of huge sloping ledges of flat rock. On the seaward point is the light-house, with the three dwelling-houses of the keepers, all precisely alike, immaculately neat and trim, surrounded by a long picket fence, and presenting a front of indomitable human order and discipline to the tumultuous and unruly ocean, which heaves away untamed and unbroken to the shores of Spain and Brittany.

The chief keeper of the light, Captain Stanley, who has been with it since it was first kindled twenty years ago, is also the warden of the sea-gulls. All around us, in the air, on the green slopes of the island, on the broad gray granite ledges, on the dancing blue waves, his feathered flocks are scattered, and their innumerable laughter and shrill screaming confuse the ear. The spruce-trees on the top of the island and the eastward slopes are almost all dead; their fallen trunks and branches and upturned roots cover the little hillocks and hollows in all directions. The gulls' nests are hidden away among this gray *débris*, or in crevices among the rocks, sheltered as much as possible from the wind and the rain.

They are not very wonderful from an architectural point of view, being nothing more than rough little circles of dried twigs and grass matted together, with perhaps a bit of seaweed or moss for padding in the case of a parent with luxurious tastes. Three eggs in a nest is the rule, and all that the average mother-gull wants is a place where she can hold them together and keep them warm until they are hatched. The young birds are præcocial; they emerge from the shell with a full suit of downy feathers, and are able to walk after a fash-



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The young birds emerge from the shell with a full suit of downy feathers.

ion, and to swim pretty well, almost from the day of their second and completed birth.

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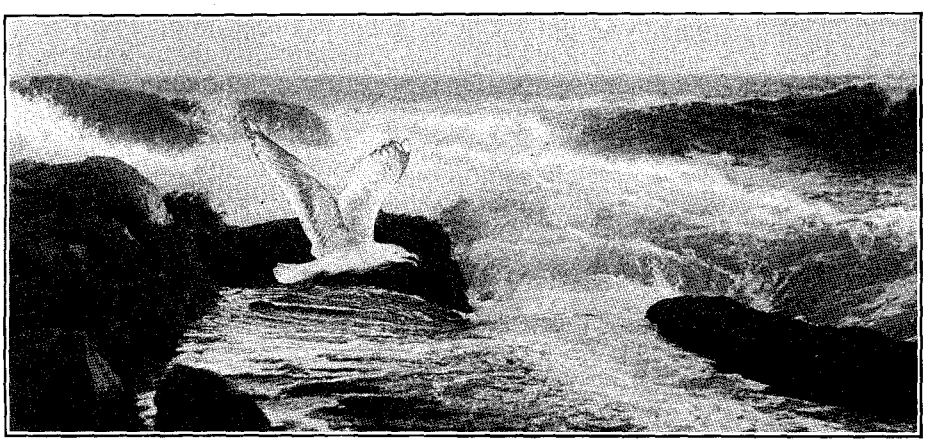
The young of altricial birds, like orioles, and bluebirds, and thrushes, being born naked and helpless, have a reason for loving their nest-homes, so carefully and delicately built to shelter their nude infancy. But the young gull cares not for "a local habitation and a name." All that he wants of home is a father and mother, nimble and assiduous in bringing food to him while he flops around, practising his legs and his wings.

It is August now, and the eggs are gone, shells and all. Almost all of the young gulls are accomplished swimmers and fair fliers by this time, and I suppose the majority of the brood can go with their parents to the nearer harbors and along the island shores to forage for themselves. But there are a few backward or lazy children—perhaps a hundred—still hanging around the places where they chipped the egg, hiding among the roots of the trees or crouching beside the rocks. What quaint, ungainly creatures they are! Big-headed, awkward, dusky, like gnomes or goblins, they hop and scuffle away as you come near them, stumbling over the tangled dead branches and the tussocks of grass, with outspread wings and clumsy motions. Follow one a little while and he will take refuge in a hole under a fallen tree, or between two big stones, squatting there without much apparent fright while you pat his back or gently scratch his head. But you must be careful not to follow the youngsters who are near the edge of the sea when there is a surf running, for if you alarm them they will plunge into the water and be bruised and wounded, perhaps killed, by the breakers throwing them against the rocks.

Wild animals, like polecats and minks, who would be likely to prey upon the young birds, are not allowed to reside on the island; and it is too far to swim from the mainland. But I wonder why large hawks and other birds of prey do not resort to this place as a marine restaurant. Perhaps a young gull is too big, or too tough, or too high-flavored a dish for them. Possibly the old gulls know how to fight for their offspring. I suppose that enough of the adult birds are always on hand for defence, although during a good part of the day the majority of the flock are away at the feeding grounds.



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How magically the great white flower of foam expands.—Page 134.

I opened the gate of the light-house enclosure and went in. Three little children who were playing in the garden came shyly up to me, each silently offering a flower. The keeper of the light, who is a most intelligent man and an ardent Audubonite, asked me into his sitting-room and told me a lot about his gulls.

In the spring, the first of them come back in March, sometimes arriving in a snowstorm. They keep to the shore most of the time, but fuss around a little, pulling old nests to pieces or making new ones. About the first of May, they move up to the centre of the island. There are three or four thousand of them, and not quite half as many

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nests. By the middle of May the first egg may be expected, and in the second week of June the first gray chick puts out his big head. A week later the brood is all hatched and the parental troubles begin.

"The old birds," says Mr. Stanley, "do not fail to provide food for their young, although as the birds get large the old ones have to go sometimes many miles to do it, but, as a general thing, there is plenty for them. I have watched them coming back at night, appearing very tired, flying very low, one behind the other. They would light near where the young should be and call, and the chicks would rush up to the old bird and pick its bill; after the proper time the old bird will stretch out its neck, and up will come a mess of almost everything, from bread to sea-cucumbers, livers, fish (all the small kind). If there is anything left after the feast the old bird will swallow it again. Woe betide the young bird that belongs to a neighbor, who tries to fill up at the wrong place! I have seen a young bird killed by one blow from the old bird's bill, his head torn in two. As the young birds grow, the old birds bring them larger fish to swallow. We have a few old birds who know the time we feed the hens, and when that time draws near they are on hand to dine with the hens."

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"Gray spirits of the sea and of the shore."—Page 131.

By the latter part of August, having done their duties, the old birds, the white ones, begin to leave the island. The dingy youngsters are slower to forsake their Eden of innocence, lingering on beside the unsullied waters and beneath the crystalline skies until the frosts of late September warn them that winter is at hand. Then the last of the colony take flight, winging their way southward leisurely and comfortably, putting in at many a port where fish are cleaned

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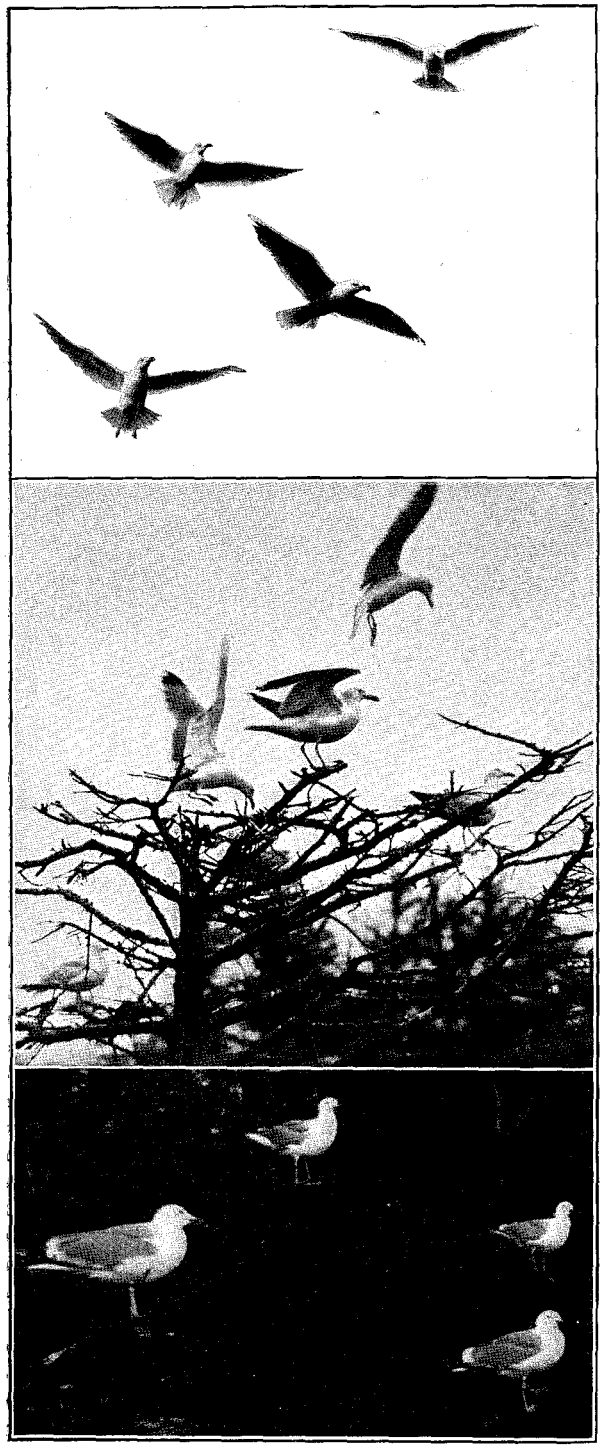

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"It is when a gull rises into the air that you perceive the perfection of his design as a master of motion."—Page 131.

and scraps are thrown overboard, until they arrive at their chosen harbor by some populous and smoke-clouded city, and learn to dodge the steamboats and swim in troubled waters.

So the Gull Paradise is deserted by all but its guardians. The school district of Duck Island—the smallest in the United States—resumes its activities; the school-house is open, the teacher raps on the desk, and the fourteen children of the keepers apply themselves to the knowledge that is dried in books.

III

IN THE GULLS' BATH-TUB

OVER our cottage we saw them flying inland every morning about ten or eleven o'clock; in groups of three or four; in companies of twelve or twenty; sometimes a solitary bird, hurrying a little as if he were belated. Over our cottage we saw them flying seaward every afternoon, one or two at a time, and then, at last, a larger company all together. The trail through the woods, up along the lovely mountain-brook, led us in the same direction as the gulls' path through the air. A couple of miles of walking underneath green boughs brought us to the shore of Jordan Pond, lying in a deep gorge between the mountains of rock with the rounded, forest-clad Bubbles at its head, and the birches, and maples, and poplars, and hemlocks fringing its clean, stony shores. Then we understood what brought the gulls up from the sea every day. They came for a fresh-water bath and a little fun in the woods.

Look at them, gathered like a flotilla, in the centre of the

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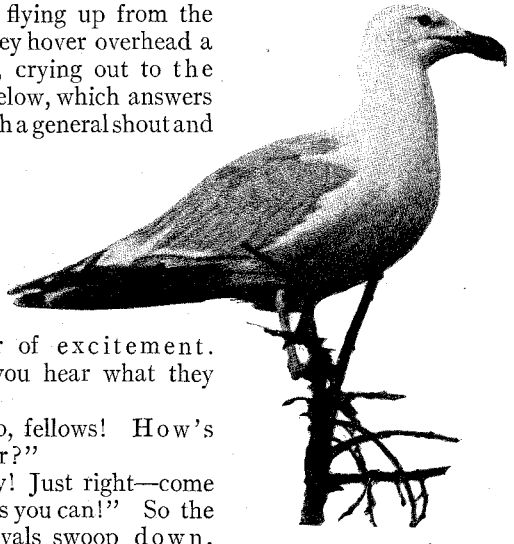
pond. They are not feeding; they are not attending to any business of importance; they are not even worrying about their young; they are not doing anything at all but "bath-ing" themselves, as my little lad used to say, in this clear, cool, unsalted water, and having the best time in the world. See how they swim lazily this way or that way, as the fancy strikes them. See how they duck their heads, and stretch their long wings in the air, and splash the water over one another; how they preen their feathers and rise on the surface, shaking themselves. Here comes a trio of late starters, flying up from the sea. They hover overhead a moment, crying out to the crowd below, which answers them with a general shout and a flutter of excitement. Didn't you hear what they said?



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A typical gull.

"Hello, fellows! How's the water?"

"Bully! Just right—come in quick's you can!" So the new arrivals swoop down, spreading out their tails like fans, and dangling their feet under them, and settling in the centre of the crowd amid general hilarity.

How long the gulls stay at their bath I do not know. Probably some of the busy and conscientious ones just hurry in for a dip and hurry back again. Others, of a more pleasure-loving temperament, make the trip more than once, like a boy I knew, whose proud boast it was that he had gone in swimming seven times in one afternoon. The very idle and self-indulgent ones, I reckon, spend nearly the whole day in their spacious and well-fitted bath-tub.

The mountain lake has been turned into a reservoir for the neighboring village of Seal Harbor. But the gulls do not know that, I am sure; nor would anyone else who judged by outward appearances suspect that such a transformation had taken place. For the dam at the outlet is made of rough stones, very low, almost unnoticeable; and the water has not been raised enough to kill any of the trees or spoil the shore. Jordan Pond, which was named for a commonplace lumberman who used to cut timber on its banks, and which has, so far as I know, no tradition or legend of any kind connected with it, is still as wild, as lovely, as perfect in its lonely charm as if it were consecrated and set apart to the memory of a score of old romances.

At the lower end, in an open space of slightly rising ground, there is an ancient farmhouse which has been extended and piazzaed and made into a rustic place of entertainment. Here the fashionable summer-folk of the various harbors come to drink afternoon tea and to eat famous dinners of broiled chicken, baked potatoes, and pop-overs. The proprietor has learned from the modern author and advertiser the secret of success; avoid versatility and stick to the line in which the public know you. Having won a reputation on pop-overs and chickens, he continues to turn them out with diligence and fidelity, like short-stories of a standard pattern.

I asked him if there was any fishing in the lake. He said that there was plenty of fishing; but he said it in a tone which made me doubtful about his meaning. 'What kind of fish were there?' 'Trout by nature, and landlocked salmon by artificial planting.' 'Could we fish for them?' 'Sure; but as for catching anything big enough to keep—well, he did not want to encourage us. It was two or three years since any good fish had been caught in the lake, though there had been plenty of fishing. But in old times men used to come over from Hull's Cove, fishing through the ice, and they caught'—then followed the usual piscatorial legends of antiquity.

But the Gypsy girl and I were not to be disheartened by historical comparisons. We insisted on putting our living luck to the proof, and finding out for ourselves what kind of fish were left in Jordan Pond. We had a couple of four-ounce rods, one of which I fitted up with a troll, while she took

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Drawn by F. E. Schoonover.

The gulls' bath-tub.—Page 139.

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the oars in a round-bottomed, snub-nosed white boat, and rowed me slowly around the shore. The water was very clear; at a depth of twenty feet we could see every stone and stick on the bottom—and no fish! We tried a little farther out, where the water was deeper. My guide was a merry rower and the voyage was delightful, but we caught nothing.

Let us set up the other rod, while we are trolling, and try a few casts with the fly as we move along. I will put the trolling-rod behind me, leaning over the back-board; if a fish should strike, he would hook himself and I could pick up the rod and land him. Now we will straighten out a leader and choose some flies—a silver doctor and a queen of the water—how would those do? Or perhaps a royal coachman would be—— Chrrr-p! goes the reel. I turn hastily around, just in time to see the trolling-rod vanish over the stern of the boat. Stop, stop! Back water—hard as you can! Too late! There goes my best-beloved little rod, with a reel and fifty yards of line, settling down in the deep water, almost out of sight, and slowly following the flight of that invisible fish, who has hooked himself and my property at the same time.

This is a piece of bad luck. Shall we let the day end with this? "Never," says the Gypsy. "Adventures ought to be continued till they end with good luck. We will put a long line on the other rod, and try that beautiful little phantom minnow, the silver silk one that came from Scotland. There must be some good fish in the pond, since they are big enough to run away with your tackle."

Round and round the shore she rows, past the points of broken rocks, underneath the rugged bluffs, skirting all the shelving bays. Faintly falls the evening breeze, and behind the western ridge of Jordan Mountain suddenly the sun drops down. Look, the gulls have all gone home. Creeping up the rosy side of Pemetic, see old Jordan's silhouette sketched in shadow by the sun. Hark, was that a coaching horn, sounding up from Wildwood Road? There's the whistle of the boat coming round the point at Seal. How it sinks into the silence, fading gradually away. Twilight settles slowly down, all around the wooded shore, and across the opal lake——

Chr-r-r-r! sings the reel. The line tightens. The little rod, firmly gripped in my hand, bends into a bow of beauty, and a hundred feet behind us a splendid silver salmon leaps into the air. "What is it?" cries the Gypsy, "a fish?" It is a fish, indeed, a noble ouananiche, and well hooked. Now if the gulls were here, who grab little fish suddenly and never give them a chance; and if the mealy-mouthed sentimentalists were here, who like their fish slowly strangled to death in nets, they should see a fairer method of angling.

The weight of the fish is twenty times that of the rod against which he matches himself. The tiny hook is caught painlessly in the gristle of his jaw. The line is long and light. He has the whole lake to play in, and he uses almost all of it, running, leaping, sounding the deep water, turning suddenly to get a slack line. The Gypsy, tremendously excited, manages the boat with perfect skill, rowing this way and that way, advancing or backing water to meet the tactics of the fish, and doing the most important part of the work.

After half an hour the ouananiche begins to grow tired and can be reeled in near to the boat. We can see him distinctly as he gleams in the dark water. It is time to think of landing him. Then we remember, with a flash of despair, that we have no landing-net! To lift him from the water by the line would break it in an instant. There is not a foot of the rocky shore smooth enough to beach him on. Our caps are far too small to use as a net for such a fish. What to do? We must row around with him gently and quietly for another ten minutes until he is quite weary and tame. Now let me draw him softly in toward the boat, slip my fingers under his gills to get a firm hold, and lift him quickly over the gunwale before he can gasp or kick. A tap on the head with the empty rod-case—there he is—the prettiest landlocked salmon that I ever saw, plump, round, perfectly shaped and colored, and just six and a half pounds in weight, the record fish of Jordan Pond!

Do you think that the Gypsy and I wept over our lost rod, or were ashamed of our flannel shirts and tweeds, as we sat down to our broiled chickens and pop-overs that evening, on the piazza of the tea-house, among the white frocks and Tuxedo jackets of the diners-out? No, for there was our prize lying in state on the floor beside our table. "And we caught him," said she, "in the gulls' bath-tub!"

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A DAY AT THE COUNTRY CLUB

A SERIES OF DRAWINGS BY

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Wanted—An Answer.

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"Fore!"

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Fisherman's Luck.

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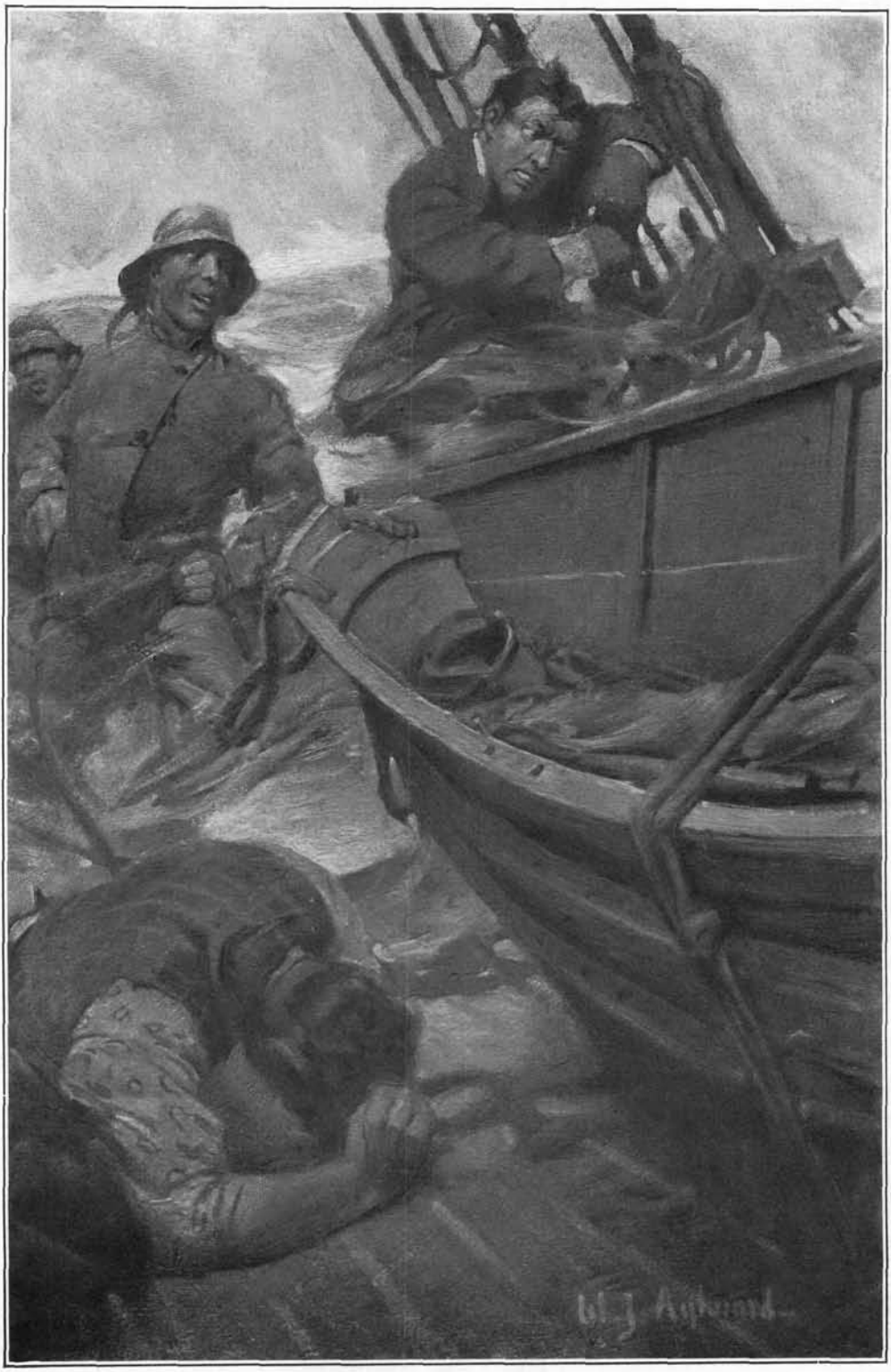

Drawn by W. J. Aylward.

Our passenger thought the devil and all was runnin' amuck over the ocean.—Page 155

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THE COMMANDEERING OF THE LUCY FOSTER

By James B. Connolly

ILLUSTRATION BY W. J. AYLWARD

THE word had been passed that Wesley Marrs was in from another slashing trip from Fortune Bay; and sure enough there was the matchless *Lucy* tied to her dock, but no sign, at the moment, of her redoubtable master. However, a hint from the crew and a search disclosed him—but of all places!

In Perry's, the picture-framer's, was Wesley, leaning over the low counter; and a sheet of brine-stained paper was in one hand, and his face was smiling as a sunlit sea. "And do a good job on it," he was saying to the clerk; "oak, or cherry, or ebony, or whatever 'tis is the swell thing in frames. And—— Hah? who?" At another word from the clerk he looked toward the door. "Hullo-o-oh, boy! Come in, come in. What? Something doin' when I got that, did y' say? Was there! Ho—ho—ho—was there?

"We was in Fortune Bay," began Wesley, "layin' to old John Rose's wharf in Folly Cove. And John had thirteen or fourteen hundred barrels of frozen herrin' spread out on the scaffolds and along the beach near by, and 'twas a sight you'd sail a hundred mile to see—them fine, fat, frozen fish layin' out there under the winter sky. And John and me'd pretty nigh come to one way of thinkin' about a price for them same herrin', when along comes the gover'ment cutter. And they hails me, and asks me if I didn't think I'd better be gettin' under weigh and headin' for home, or anywhere else—it didn't matter much where, so long's 'twas away from the Newf'undland coast.

"Nacherally I said I didn't see why I should, and mildly enough, too, I said it—mildly enough, that is, considering. There was differences of opinion, to be sure, on the herrin' rights of American and Newf'undland fishermen, but one man's opinion was as good as another's till it was settled.

"'But no man's opinion ain't nigh as good as the gover'ment's,' says the cutter's commander, and damn abrupt, too, he was.

"'I dunno,' I says. 'It depends on whose gover'ment's——'

"'Well, my gover'ment's gen'rally,' he butts in again; 'but this time *your* gover'ment's.'

"'When I see it I'll believe it,' I says.

"'Well,' and he whisks a paper out of his pocket and slaps it under my nose. An American newspaper, too, it was, which you think'd have a good word for Gloucester. You know the paper, and I know it, which's never yet hesitated to slam Gloucester's interests. Now it had the opinion of this chap in Washington, and we all know *him*. You know how long he'd hesitate to sacrifice Gloucester and all New England—yes, and the whole country, if need be, for a foreign policy of his that three-quarters of the people of this country don't want. This interview with him said that the contentions of the American fishermen as to their herring rights could probably not be upheld before an international court of—m—m—adjudication, that's it. And on another page, the one where this was put—no pictures or despatches—editorial page, yes—Curtin pointed out more to the same effect; that no doubt Gloucester would come to her senses now and that maybe the legislators, the Congressmen and the powerful Senator, who had hitherto succeeded in blocking the wheels of international something or other, would halt—and so on.

"'What do you think now?' says Curtin; 'your great American statesman.'

"'Great slush!' I says. 'And him an American? Why, he's no more American than you are, Captain Curtin. He only happened to be born in America. Why, he's got as much use for most American people as for gorillas in the jungle. He probably thinks men like me and the gorillas pretty near the same class. Gover'ment by him?' I goes on. 'Why, his notion of a good gover'ment is to have the

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laws so that the puffy-eyed, heavy-jowled chaps from the mahogany offices can sleep easy nights. Anything that interferes with the comfort of that kind of people is bad gover'ment; but for you and me and men like us—the men that have to sail the sea, and them that dig in the mines, that cut the timber in the winter woods, or that plough the prairie, or do any of those hundred things whereby a man brings something into his country that wasn't there before—to hell with us! You blasted lick-spittle! d'y' imagine I'm intendin' to be bound by your notion of what law is?' I says and punches the picture of his whiskered face in the paper. I only wished I had himself instead.

"Oh, I was good and mad, and the thought of them herrin' that old John Rose had spread out there, it didn't make me feel any better. I turns to Curtin. 'Do you really mean that I got to get out this bay?

"'I do just that, Captain Marrs,' he says. 'And to make sure that you do go—for I can't stay hangin' around here forever to watch you—here's a gentleman will see that you do. I've instructions from St. John to put this gentleman aboard you, and his orders are to stay aboard till you're well out the bay.'

"Well, I was fit to be triced to the main riggin'. But he had me, his steam-cutter and his guns; my vessel locked into a little harbor and not so much as a duck gun aboard. So, though I hove some lovin' glances back at old John Rose and them fourteen hundred barrels of fine, fat, frozen herrin', I swings the *Lucy* out, with the gentleman from St. John's wavin' pleasantly from the *Lucy's* quarter to the commander of the cutter on his bridge.

"This chap the cutter had put aboard to watch me was a new appointee of the Crown, he told me. He meant well enough; but why is it so many of those chaps think there's something about themselves that's so much ahead of anything that can ever come out of you and me? A large man, he was—not big, but large—you know that kind—pleasant-lookin' enough, only his eyes had about as much color and fire as a boiled hake's—you've seen the washy eyes of a boiled fresh hake—yes? Hah? Goes better if it's well salted? It cert'nly do.

"And so, I cal'late, would this chap, who began to tell me all about himself right away—had been up and down the coast of his own country in some little steamer on some Crown commission or other, and never seasick in his life. No, sir, never. And maybe so, though to offer that as proof that you're cut out for a seaman is about as sensible as to say that if the smell of fresh paint don't make you sick to your stomach then the Lord intended you for a painter. Ain't that about so? Sure it is. But what this chap didn't know of the sea! He told me of his coming across the Atlantic. One day, though, it did blow! My word, yes. Near as I could make out, she took some water over her bow one day and wet down some fat old unsuspectin' ladies that was baskin' on the sunny side of the main deck. A great storm—yes, it must 've been.

"Just outside the bay the *Lucy* ran into a nice breeze o' wind, and I took the stays'l off her, for you see she'd started her topm'st on the run down, and I misdoubted the stick 'd stand the stays'l and that gaff tops'l both pulling on it to once. If it warn't the stick was weak and I expected to use it later, I'd no more taken that stays'l off that day than I'd taken off my undershirt 'cause of the heat—and it the fourteenth of December. But seeing it come off, this chap says, 'Hah, the storm too strong for her, captain?'

"'Storm?' I says. 'What storm? And too strong for the *Lucy?* For the *Lucy!*' I says, and as I'm standin' here 'twas no more than the pleasantest, cheerfullest, agreeablest weather imaginable—a proper sailin' breeze, just what a doctor who'd ordered a sea voyage for an invalid would 've had, with no more sea than to barely save the gang from washin' down decks next mornin'.

"Thinkin' his remarks over during that night while we were rolling about outside the bay put ideas into me. And thinkin' again of them fourteen hundred barrels of fine, fat, frozen herrin' back to old John Rose's made me say to myself: 'Wesley, but you'll sure go down in Gloucester's history as cert'nly a damn fool if you don't manage to get them herrin', statesman, cutter, and Crown commissioner, notwithstandin'.'

"And the breeze makin', d'y' see, I turns to the Crown job chap. 'By the way'—and I was deferential as hell, don't you think I warn't—'by the way, sir, where was I to take you to?'

"'Why, out of Fortune Bay.'

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"'Yes, but then where? We're out the bay now.'

"'Why, I'm sure I don't know.'

"Well, I thought that was about as intelligent as he looked. Didn't know! Get's aboard a vessel and don't know where she's bound. But it was good business for me, and I gave him time to think it over. His was a brain that needed a lot of time before it got to workin' so you could notice it.

"'Why, where *are* you goin' to?' he asks after a while.

"'Well, my home port's Gloucester.'

"'Gloucester? That's in the States, isn't it?'

"'What!' I says.

"'Yes, yes, I think I've heard of it, captain. Oh, dear me, yes—a fishin' village, but I don't remember seein' it on any map.'

"Well, I could have hove him over where he stood—a fishin' village! Village! There, thinks I, is another of them that imagines that in Gloucester the fishermen live in little huts on the beach and every evenin' after putting out the cat, we takes a lantern and looks our little boats over, and, maybe with the wife and children to help, hauls 'em a foot or two higher on the beach so the flood tide won't float 'em off durin' the night. Village! And not on the map! 'Why, you pink-haired tea-drinker,' I came near sayin' 'Gloucester's all over the map.' But I didn't. I did say, though, 'Gloucester's the greatest fishin' port in the world,' a bit warm maybe.

"'Oh!' he says.

"'Oh!' I ohs after him. 'And I don't know but what I'll run for there,' but at the same time, mind you, havin' no more notion of goin' home without a load of herrin' than of dumping our grub over the side.

"Well, the air 'round there freshened up, till it got to be what you might call a tidy little breeze o' wind, and the *Lucy*, bein' light, was hopping something scandalous. We'd taken out, d'y' see, most of her ballast before leavin' home, but so she mightn't blow over altogether on the run down to Newf'undland, we'd stowed away about thirty tons of small rocks in her. But in anticipation of gettin' them herrin', all that loose rock that was intended to keep her from capsizin' had been hove out alongside old John Rose's wharf in Folly Cove, and now she was up on top of every wave like one of them empty air-balls that you sometimes see dancin' on top of a column of water out on the front lawns of swell houses.

"Now, mind you, this warn't no bad gale o' wind all this time, but 'twas plain enough our passenger thought the devil and all was runnin' amuck over the ocean. Maybe the *Lucy's* behavior helped out the notion. There's nothing logy about the *Lucy*, you know, even when she's got all her hundred ton of pig iron cemented next her keelson. But now she was leapin' like a gamb'lin' goat on a green mossy hillside, only there warn't no moss growin' anyway 'round *her*. But 'twas cert'nly amusin' to watch her—that is, if you were acquainted with her ways and knew she meant no harm.

"But this chap knew nothing of the *Lucy's* qualifications. And he knew damn less of the sea, and pretty soon he was grippin' the weather riggin' and, by the expression of his face, wonderin' how much longer, I guess, before she was goin' to the bottom. I'd no notion startin' off that his features could hold so much emotion. And the crew were lookin' properly scared, too, for I'd tipped 'em off early that they mustn't be too gay when on deck. 'A tempest of this magnitude,' I says to them 'is a terrible thing. So behave according.' And they did.

"After a time I told the Crown chap I thought he ought to go below and have a mug of coffee, and 'twas ticklin' to see him pull himself together for that dash to the hatch. He cert'nly must 've thought he was takin' his life in his hands when he let go that riggin'. What I wanted to get him below for was so he'd have a look at what loose water was on the floor of the forec's'le, for, of course, you know it's nothing again' the *Lucy* if, after her years of hard drivin' and sail-carryin', her for'ard planks is a bit loose. Cert'nly not. Only nacheral—sure—that's what I say—three-inch plankin' bein' only three-inch plankin', after all. In the forec's'le the men were swashin' around with the water to their knees. It's a sight I've noticed that always impresses a shore-goin' man. It cert'nly impressed the Crown appointee this time. He gets one good look—'My God!' he says, 'she's sinking!' and rushes up on deck and takes a fresh turn of himself around the riggin'.

"Then, to help things along, I pulls Tony, the cook, into it. 'Didn't I see you

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with a pair of rosary beads the other day when you was overhaulin' your diddy-box?' I asks Tony. And he says yes, he had a pair his wife gave him, and I asks him wouldn't he get 'em out and do a little prayin' where he could be seen. 'Why for? why for?' demands Tony, quite indignant, mind you. I had to explain it to him. 'Now, Tony,' I says, 'it's this way. Half the sea stories that's ever been written has always some kind of a dago, when 'tisn't a Frenchman, droppin' to his knees and mumblin' his prayers when maybe he ought to be cuttin' away the spars or mannin' the pumps. And what I want you to do now, Tony, is to go up on deck and live up to your reputation.'

"Well, Tony'd be damned if he would, and said there was never a Portugee yet didn't have more courage, even if they didn't write books about it, more than any damn Englishman that ever lived. England? Huh! Where was they when Alfonse Hairikay, where was they when Bartly Diaz, where was they when Vasco da Gammar or some such chap, and he mentioned a dozen other names that I'd never heard of before, and I doubt if anybody else ever did. Even Jim Riley, who's something of a schoolmaster, said they were past him.

"'Now, Tony, I know all that,' I says. 'I've had your kind for twenty-six years, and in that many winters and summers in small vessels on the North Atlantic a man does see some blue times. I've never seen one of you quit yet; but that ain't it, Tony. 'Tisn't your national pride now, Tony. Consider, Tony,' I says, 'them fourteen hundred barrels of fine, fat herrin' up to Fortune Bay, and the wad of bills you'll be handin' over to the wife, and the children, Tony—consider them black-eyed, curly-haired rascals rollin' their little blue wheelbarrows or haulin' their little red sleds all over the hill this winter, if ever the *Lucy* sees them herrin' in her hold, for if ever she does, Tony, all the cutter commanders and Crown commissioners and statesmen from here to hell won't get 'em out the *Lucy* till the gang hoists 'em out to her dock in Gloucester.

"And Tony warmed up and said he would, only he wouldn't use no rosary. He took a pocketful of yellow-eyed beans out of the stores instead, and goin' up on deck he flops down by the for'ard hatch, as near under the lee of the dories as he could get, one eye out for what comfort there was, and starts in. And not such a bad job, either. He lowers his head to the deck and says something. And he looks aloft and says something, I don't know what. But I know that with every bend he takes a yellow-eyed bean out of his pocket and heaves it overboard; and up and down, heavin' the yellow-eyed boys over, he goes on. And Jim Riley—he never passes the Crown commissioner without makin' an act of contrition. 'Oh, oh, oh, the sinner I've been!' moans Jim, by way of completin' the picture.

"All this time the vessel 'd been workin' back toward the bay and Fortune Head warn't far away, and all at once a ledge of rock shows up under our lee. We waited till the passenger saw it, which he did pretty quick, for you c'n be sure he warn't overlookin' any of the nacheral dangers. 'Rocks!' he yells. 'Where—away?' says I and springs to the riggin', with my hand shadin' my eyes. And half the gang on deck springs to the riggin', and every blessed one of 'em shades his eyes with his hands and says, 'Where away, sir?'

"'Off to stawboard,' says he.

"'Sure enough,' I says, and 'Sure enough,' repeats the gang, and, 'Cripes, but what an eye that gentleman's got!' adds Riley.

"'We must work her off,' I says.

"'Will you be able to?' inquires our friend.

"'I dunno,' I answers, 'whether we will or no, but I hope so, 'cause it's a bad place—and the harbor of Saint Peer is around the corner,' I added, which it warn't, knowin', too, that all he cared to know was was it solid land. The Pewee Islands would 've suited him just then—anything, I cal'late, that warn't floating around loose in the ocean.

"'Yes, I'll try to make it,' I goes on, and I gathered the crew together and tells 'em we were in a tight place and to die like men, and read 'em a lecture on our priceless heritage and the immortal courage of our ancestors. Did y' ever try to make up such a speech as you imagine a man like our passenger 'd like, and have listenin' to you a couple of Rileys and Sullivans, and a Frenchman from the Miquelons, and a few others whose grand-people had been privateersmen in 1812? No? Well, you don't ever want to—it's disturbin'. I winds up

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mine by suddenly, much to his surprise, yanking Tony off the hatch. 'You cowardly dago, be a man!' I says to Tony, and he didn't like it. A little more and I think he'd mutinized on me.

"And we were makin' out fine, only just when the passenger was almost brightenin' with joy came more danger. The *Lucy* got caught aback—myself to the wheel, yes—and down for the rocks she was borne. Well, there were the jagged devils all but under our stern, and that man sweated blood from his very heart, I'll bet, before she took the wind again and was safe away.

"Man, but how the gang standin" round deck puffed their cheeks at each other! Everybody but Tony, who'd gone below disgusted. Some of 'em was even more thankful than the passenger, you'd think, and he was shrinkin' up again' the lanyards, that he hadn't let go for a second in the past four hours. 'My God!' he gasps, 'what a narrer escape!'

"'Narrer? Well you might say it!' I says. 'The narrest I've had in twenty-six years of fishin'. And after that, you c'n see, sir, it wouldn't do to try and get by those rocks to make Saint Peer.'

"'No, no, no,' he says; 'but can't you run her in some safe place?'

"'There's one place I could safely make for with the wind the way it is,' I says. 'There is just one place in the world where I could go,' I says, 'but I'm not allowed to.'

"'Where's that?' he says.

"'Fortune Bay.'

"'Why not, captain? Why not? In case of life or death——'

"'Not even for life or death, sir, could I without the embargo was lifted off the vessel. If I was to put into Fortune Bay now and the cutter find me there, my vessel would be confiscated by the gover'ment.'

"Them light-colored pop-eyes of his almost took on a shine. 'But wouldn't my orders release you?'

"'H-m,' I says. 'H-m—I hadn't thought of that. Do *you* think it would, sir?'

"'Why, of course it would. If the Crown's agent can order you to do a thing, then the Crown's agent can release you. The home gover'ment takes precedence over any colonial or local gover'ment. Can't you see that?'

"'Well,' I says, slow and ruminatin'-like. 'H-m—I dunno—m-m——'

"'Look here,' he breaks in, and you'd 'a' died if you could seen him clingin' to the lanyards, taking a fresh hold every once in a while when a hogshead or two of spray would break over him. And whoever was to the wheel always took care he got 'em reg'larly—you'd 'a' laffed, though Lord knows nothin' but death itself could 'a' unhooked the grip he had to begin with. Well, to hear him there tryin' to overcome my objections to goin' into Fortune Bay—Jim Riley, passin' by, had to say, 'And are people really taxed to give jobs to the likes o' him?'

"'That'll do you!' I says to Jim.

"'What was it he said?' asks the home gover'ment chap.

"'Only his weak heart,' I answers him, 'sayin' if we don't do something soon we'll be lost—vessel and all hands.'

"He broke into fresh argument then, but I didn't give in till we both happened to overhear Dal Hawkins saying to Riley: 'It's fine to have respect, same's the skipper has, for the Crown; but I do hope he'll change his mind soon, for cert'nly it's beginnin' to look blue for us around here.' Dal's speech made a great impression. You know Dal—a hard, gray-faced, serious man, the iron-nerved man of the old story books, y' know—yes.

"'Well,' I says, 'when Dal Hawkins talks of death and danger, maybe it's time to do something, and I'll go, provided, sir'—and I looked judicial as hell saying it—'provided you'll make it a command and put it in writin'.' And we went below and got out pen and ink, and when he thawed out some he wrote it out. And never a suspicion entered the soul of that Crown appointee while he was writing it out why the vessel lay so easy. Hove to, y' see, so he could write, she was layin' like a duck in a pond. Up to that time we'd been puttin' her any old which way to make her hop.

"He was done at last. 'There it is, all properly worded,' he says, and read it out. And there it was—and here it is now again."

Wesley reached across the counter and took the paper from the clerk. "Here it is; listen—dated December the fifteenth.

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

"It is by my command that Wesley Marrs, master of the American schooner *Lucy Foster*, returns with me to within the limits of Fortune

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Bay, there to land me at some port to be later designated; and it is also by my command that the said Wesley Marrs be allowed to remain with his vessel, the said *Lucy Foster*, at some safe anchorage within the limits of the said Fortune Bay until the violence of the present storm shall have abated."

Wesley paused. His auditor, looking over his shoulder, interjected, "But there's more to it."

"Sure there is, a tail to it—postscript, yes. I'm coming to that—that's separate. 'Twas me made him add that on after he thought 'twas all complete. When you're on a job there's nothin' like doin' it up right. Cert'nly, is there? Sure there isn't. Well, listen," and Wesley read further:

"*P. S.*—The said Wesley Marrs wishes it understood that he does this much against his will.

"Warn't that a good one—hah? Much against his will! And violence of the storm! Ain't that good—hah, what? And when we dumped him off at a little port, Charlemagne, just inside the bay, he was that grateful he gave me a cigarette-holder, a beautiful little yellow thing with gold edges—here 'tis, see—about as useful to me as one of those Japanese kimonos that's marked three forty-eight in the store windows these days. But when I get up to the house I'll make a whistle of it for the baby.

"Well, after we'd put him ashore I sent word by a jack over to old John Rose's place, and was intendin' to wait for dark to slip out after it; but one of the gang who'd rowed our passenger ashore—and nacherally stopped to have a drink while he was there—came back with the word that that fool Crown man 'd been tellin' the natives what a narrer escape the vessel had off the harbor o' Saint Peer, and they got askin' him all about it, and one of 'em, gettin' more curious, says, 'What time was it you left here?' And he tells him. 'H-m,' sniffs the doubtin' one, looking at the clock, 'she's a big sailor, the *Lucy Foster*, but she no more than any other vessel ever built can come forty-five mile in an hour an' a half.'

"And so we decided, without waitin' for the further judgment of the Crown, that the violence of the storm had abated, and put over to old John Rose's place. And we anchored to a spring cable in Folly Cove that night, and cert'nly them herrin' looked beautiful as so many solid silver fish in the moonlight.

"'He, he,' cackles old John. 'I knowed ee'd be back. How much, Wesley, be un goin' to give for them herrin'?'

"'A dollar and a half, John—say twenty-one hundred dollars and not stop to count 'em. That is, John, I would only for the Crown law, John.'

"'Perish the Crown!' says loyal John. 'Twenty-one hundred dollars—take 'em away.'

"We loaded by night and we loaded by day, and when all was below I drove for open water, for I was afeared the word 'd been passed to the cutter. And sure enough it had, but not till we were abreast of Cannaigre did we get a sight of her. We warn't so far off but I knew Curtin could see the *Lucy* was drawing a whole lot more water than she lawfully should—his law. But what he really thought about it we never learned. We didn't let him get near enough to tell us, but to help enlighten him I had Riley in his schoolmaster's hand make a fair clean copy of that Crown document. And I marked it '*attest*' and '*a true copy, Wesley Marrs*,' and further put on the gill of a herrin' by way of a red seal, and rememberin' that in my coat pocket was a length of ribbon I pulled from off my little girl's head before leavin' home, I got that, and biting off about four inches of it, pinned that on by way of a blue seal, and I said, 'There, my royal commander, there's a proper Crown document for you,' and stuffed it in an empty quart bottle of the three-black-letters brand which Dal Hawkins 'd been usin' for linseed oil, he said—but no smell of oil in it—and corked it tight and made it fast to an old keg and hove the whole thing overboard.

"And by and by we could see them hauling it over the side, after which I didn't linger around, but takes out the chart and draws one straight line from Cannaigre Rock to Cape Sable, and another from Cape Sable to Eastern Point, and down them two lanes, with fourteen hundred barrels of fine, fat, frozen herrin' in her hold, the *Lucy* came a-snortin'."

Wesley turned to the clerk. "And be sure you do a good job on it, Joe. Don't spare no expense, mind—the best of oak, or cherry, or ebony, or whatever's the latest thing in frames. And when it's done I'm goin' to tack it over the little oil painting of the *Lucy* on the east wall of what my wife

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calls the drawin'-room. And"—Wesley turned toward the door—"what's that? A little touch? Well-l-l, seein' it's so brisk a mornin', and the fifty-odd cold hours we was on the passage, I don't know but what I owe a little somethin' warmin' to my system."

In the saloon opposite Perry's, with the hollow of one foot resting on the under-rail, an elbow resting on the bar, Wesley poured out his drink and raised it up, but presently set it down again to gently roar: "Hah! hah! 'by my orders, and much against his will does Captain Marrs do this'! Ho! ho! And yet," reflectively, "that wants a finishin' touch. By rights I ought to been there when Curtin met that Crown chap—and be sure he did—and pointin' that out to him, asks him, 'But did you *really* write that?' Hah, hah! ho, ho! Well"—Wesley raised his glass—"hopin' that every cargo of herrin' out o' Newf'undland will come as easy, and that we'll never meet any worse Crown chaps than that one—here's a shoot!"

"And now"—Wesley hauled his cloth cap down over his brow—"to see about them herrin'. I was offered three twenty-five coming into the dock, but I think I c'n do a shade better than that, for you bet there won't be any herrin' come out of Fortune Bay in a hurry again. And if I get three-fifty, say, it won't be too bad, will it—hah—for a poor ignorant fisherman that don't know international law from a Japanese proclamation of war? Oh, we poor slobs o' fishermen! Ha, hah! 'Much against his will, and by my orders'! Ho, ho! wouldn't that melt any loose ice you might have 'round your deck—hah, what? But don't mind me any more. Come on down and lay your eyes on the *Lucy* again. She c'n most talk, that vessel. Come and have a peek at her."

And out the door and down the street swung Wesley, whistling blithely.

THE GHOST AT POINT OF ROCKS

By Frank H. Spearman

ILLUSTRATIONS BY W. T. BENDA

AS for the country—there is really no end of country around Point of Rocks. When Hughie Morrison asked about the station after he had been assigned to it, he was told that on the north his territory would extend to the pole. He was assured that he would find very little of the country in any direction competitive, and, in matter of fact, he never did find any, though Martin Duffy at one time advised him to circularize the Esquimaux with a view of securing any portion of their cold-storage business that might be getting away from Jim Hill.

On the south, while there was no competition in sight, there was even less of business. The southern country for three thousand miles stood on end—at least so Hughie concluded after he had climbed the peak of Point of Rocks to look the field over and make a preliminary traffic survey. After he had climbed down he wrote to his mother that if arrangements could be made to ship all the scenery out of his territory and ship all the unassigned rainbows in, it would make a great farming country. Answering her affectionate inquiries from the East, he wrote that he was making money fast; that he feared, at the moment, to ship it in large sums out of the country, but that she need feel no anxiety; he really had the rocks and would show them to her when she came out.

Point of Rocks has been called everything that is bad because of its reputation for loneliness. The point, a mere speck on a spreading map, set far and singly out on the high seas of the railroad desert, was the dread of all operators on the mountain division, and Hughie Morrison was the first night man sent there after the panic. When there were but two passenger trains a day on the division, and the Government

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receivers were objecting to these, Hughie, with the rattlesnakes and a worn-out key, was holding down Point of Rocks. Before he and the day man were sent, the Point had long been abandoned. One building, the section house, stood half a mile east of the station, and in this the section men hived. Other than these no human beings lived within miles of Hughie. To the north stretched the forgotten land, on the west rose the point monstrous, and to the south, generally speaking, hell prevailed.

To this spot President Bucks had sent his nephew, Hugh Morrison, to learn the railroad business. Hughie was a Princeton man when he asked his uncle to come through with some sort of job; and his uncle, at that time reorganizing the system, and having troubles of his own, was not disposed to take on any family difficulties. He merely passed the word to Martin Duffy, chief despatcher at Medicine Bend, to put Hughie through. Accordingly the Princeton man, who had turned twenty, could count to a hundred, and knew that the Rocky Mountains were surrounded by land, was brought to the Mountain Division. Martin soon saw that he could not get rid of Hughie merely by putting him through. Hughie learned the key with facility, ate what was set before him, and looked pleasant when the railroad men set up jobs. Worst of all, Martin Duffy found that he was beginning to like the green one. But orders were orders. Bucks had said Hughie was to be put through, and there was nothing more merciful to Martin's mind for the boy than a quick railroad death. Martin considered that in such a case strong medicine is best, and well knew that to assign a man to a night job at Point of Rocks was equivalent to the knock-out drops.

Hughie never blanched when the orders came. Why should he? He did not know Point of Rocks from Colorado Springs, and made his preparations and departed promptly for the new post. When he asked Duffy where he should board, Martin, a taciturn man, said he might board in Texas if he liked, provided he could make the hours for the job.

Hughie took hold, and the fun began. The trainmen bullied him, called him Hughie and "Nephew," stole his cigars, and made him glad to be left alone with the night, the desert, the coyotes, and the stars. Hughie got used to looking for the constellations of his youth, and to know for a certainty that Orion, calm and immensely dignified, would never fail him and that between freight trains about three o'clock in the morning the red heart of the Scorpion in the south-west could always be counted on, was a mild sort of consolation. Poling at Princeton, they had made, at three in the morning, no impression on him; at Point of Rocks there were absolutely no other associations to suggest God's country.

Besides these there was, in matter of fact, nothing and nobody within measurable distance of the night man. Hughie was a good bit of a philosopher; but even among those of the railroad men who had never been east of the Missouri River a shift from Princeton to Point of Rocks was commonly conceded to be a fright.

When Hugh was told that at one time a colony had existed at Point of Rocks he was unbelieving. Yet an Englishman, fascinated in an earlier day by the mountains, had chosen the wildest spot between Medicine Bend and Bear Dance for a cattle-ranch, and his shipping yards were put in at Point of Rocks. He built for himself in the hills east of the station a great brick house. Deserted and in the slow decay of loneliness, it had stood long after the downfall of his hopes, to serve while a vagrant army of prospectors moved across the country as a quarry for the hammer and chisel of their camp-fires. After they had left it naked in its ruin to the elements it had been struck by lightning and burned. Yet after all of this the house stood. Built in stanch English fashion, its walls remained, and scarred and roofless its height and strength still defied the sun and the sand and the wind.

At one time the Englishman had a hundred men working on his ranches. He founded a colony, planned an abattoir, rode like a fiend, and drank like an engine. The beginning had been ten years before Hughie's day, the end perhaps five. A sheep-herder knew the story. Sitting on the ground one night beside the passing track, a full-moon night with the white streaming through the sightless windows of the ruin on the hill, he had told Hughie about the Swintons—Richard and the bachelor brother John—Hughie, silent, in his belted trousers and bare arms, standing while the wind blew softly, with his back and one foot against the station building, listening.

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Once in a month, out of the dreadful south, the sheep-herder, a lost man with sand-burned eyes and sun-split lips, came to hear a human voice. He was the sole caller on the college man at Point of Rocks.

The sheep-herder was pointing in the moonlight to the east. "Dick Swinton built yards from the switch away over to the creek, and from there down to the curve."

"Yards?" echoed Hughie incredulously.

"Cattle yards. He had a barn five hundred feet long the other side of the draw for his Holsteins; another big barn over there to the right for a string of thoroughbreds. He run his horses in Denver and Colorado Springs. The whole family used to go down there summers—had a house down at the Springs nigh as big as this one. Mrs. Swinton, she was the thoroughbred, and the governess and the boy and the little girl—she had her own maid—used to go down regular with the China-boy cook and all hands, private car. I seen twenty-two trunks to one time piled up right there where you stand—oh, they were blooded, all right. Champagne right along from New York, twelve cases at a lick, piled up here for the wagons, when their cousins come out from the old country. All gone to hell. Was you ever in England?"

Hughie used to think about the story. He never tired of hearing about the Swintons. They were people, and had done things on a scale, and being the only interest, living or dead, about Point of Rocks, they were naturally matter for reflection. What if they had sunk their money? They had sunk it royally. The east-bound passenger train was not due to pass Point of Rocks until midnight, and from then until four thirty o'clock in the morning, when the west-bound train was due, the operator had abundance of time to think. Even from sunset until midnight all alone under the lamp in the station, reading, perhaps, or writing, was a good bit of a stretch. But after Hughie got acquainted with the weather-warped sheep-herder he found something to look forward to in the night at Point of Rocks—he was waiting for a storm.

"Wait till you get a good thunder-storm some night," the sheep-herder had muttered. "Then watch them windows over on the hill—you'll see dancing over there yet; I seen it since the house was burned, right along." When he spoke, he was telling of the big dances he remembered in the brick house at times that the New Yorkers and the English cousins came out in the car. The sheep-herder believed that when it stormed in the mountains they still danced through the floorless halls. Hughie wanted to ask a lot more questions when he heard of this: it was a story different from the others. But the passenger train in the west was whistling, and when it had come and gone the sheep-herder had disappeared. He blew in from the south like the wind, and died as silently away.

Night after night Hughie waited for him to come back; night after night, at sunset, he scanned the vanishing point of the track, looking in vain for the stunted figure and the sidewise, twisted shamble. The silence of the place with the long hours of twilight and dark outside his window began to grow on Hughie, and one evening he walked across the creek for a change and up the hill to the ruin.

He had not realized before how large the house had been. Standing under the brick entrance arch where double doors had enclosed a deep vestibule, he saw how heavily every part of the house was built. The timbers that had crashed through the floors when the roof fell were like bridge stringers. The floors themselves had been framed like decks, and their charred *débris* lay in a forbidding tangle just as the storm drowning the conflagration had left it. The blackened walls gaped; the parting light streamed through vacant casements, and above the arches of the tower—which had suffered least from the fire—stars twinkled. The desolation was complete.

He climbed into the tower. A stairway still remained, and, climbing higher, he found intact a half-story, once a child's playroom. Prints pasted on the walls hung in tatters. A little scrap-heap of rusty tin cars lay under the window opening. The sheep-herder had said the little girl was wild about engines and often used to ride with the enginemen on the passenger trains when the family were travelling. In a corner Hughie saw a Japanese doll, weather-beaten, but still lying where it had been left to its last sleep, with a battered locomotive for pillow. The frock was faded, and the pink cheeks and almond brows of the doll were blanched. He stooped to lift it from its long nap and something fell from its bosom. Hughie picked the something up. It was a broken

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ivory miniature, but the colors cunningly laid in still preserved the features of a little girl. Nearly half of the oval had been broken away, but the child's face remained. Under his lamp that night, Hughie examined it. Brown hair fell over the temples and the high cheeks, were touched with pink. The eyes deep-set and the nose straight and dedetermined, looked boyish, but below it the face narrowed to a mere dimple of a girl's mouth; the chin was gone.

That night the east-bound train was an hour late. The operator, idle in his solitude, studied the miniature. He wanted to know more about the children that had played in the tower and ridden the desert on their ponies —he had heard something about it—and wished continually for the sheep-herder to come back. The old fellow had been gone this time for weeks. While Hughie was reflecting, the train whistled, and he was still in a study when the engineman, Oliver Sollers, walked into the office for orders.

"I struck a man to-night, Hughie," said Oliver, sitting down as he drew off his heavy gloves.

"Where?"

"Somewhere the other side of Castle Creek. He's back in the baggage-car. I didn't see him. It's bad luck, too, to strike a man that you don't see; leastwise, it never happened to me before. He must have been walking ahead of us, I guess, and the pilot picked him up. When we stopped at Castle Creek for water I got down to oil around and found him on the front end. He was an old man, too," added the engineman moodily. "We will have to leave him here with you, Hughie, for Number One to take back to Sleepy Cat. Well, it can't be helped. Got any orders, boy?"

The trainmen brought in the body. They laid it on the waiting-room floor and Hughie, busy with his orders, did not look at the man. After the train pulled out and the dull red of the tail-lights had disappeared in the east he sat down under his lamp at the window table, the telegraph key in front of him clicking vagrant messages, to wait a few minutes before stepping out of the office to close the waiting-room door. The door was left open at night, but to-night it must not be, because the coyotes had long noses for blood. When Hughie went at length to bolt the outside door he took the lamp in his hand and, coming back, stooped to lift the newspaper from the dead man's face. It was the sheep-herder.

The operator let the newspaper drop. He went slowly back into the office. He remembered now that he had never asked the man his name. If he knew it he could perhaps notify relatives somewhere—at the very least supply a name to go on the coffin.

Dismiss the shock as he would, he realized that he was unnerved. He sat down with his head in his hands, thinking over it, when he heard thunder in the mountains; the sky had been overcast when the train pulled in. Soon rain began to fall in great drops on the roof above his head, and within a few moments in the land of no rain it was raining a flood. For a long time the storm hung above the peaks in the Mission range. Presently the wind shifted and shook the little station building with a yelp. Then, with the shock of an earthquake, the lightning claps of a cloudburst, and the pent-up fury of a long, dry summer, down came the storm from the high mountains.

The wind whipped the water in sheets against the window-panes, and little gusts, exploding in the downpour, rattled the sash viciously. If the wind abated the rain plunged on the roof, and when it blew, water poured in at every joint and crevice of the dried-out building. Hughie turned down the lamp, cut in the lightning arrester, and sat down with his hands in his pockets.

He knew now what the sheep-herder had meant when he talked of a storm. The lightning ceased to crash very soon and the thunder that shook the earth for a few moments abated, but great electric waves played almost silently and in a terrifying way through the deluge of falling rain. The desert rippled and swam in the dance of waters, the far mountains were strangely lighted, and above them distant thunder moaned unceasingly.

Hughie unaffectedly wished himself away from Point of Rocks. He swore mentally but savagely at everything about the place except his dead companion, and when he could sit still no longer he began to walk around with his hands in his pockets. As he passed the waiting-room door he saw that the rain was driving in at the open window above the head of the sheep-herder. He resisted an inclination to turn away, for the window ought to be closed. Above the roar of the rain he heard now through the open

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sash the roar of the water foaming down Dry Bitter Creek. Hughie walked out into the dark waiting-room to close the window. As he stepped toward it he saw the play of the storm in the ruin on the hill.

From the heavens to the horizon the naked basin of the desert trembled in the shock of the storm. Through the deluge great curtains of light, shot from horizon to horizon, threw the landscape up in fanciful, quivering pictures. Water leaped on arid slopes, hills floated in falling rivers, rain fell in never-ending sheets, and above all played the incessant blaze of the maddened sky and the long roll of the far and sullen thunder.

He looked at the old house. Like a lamp set within a skull, lightning burned and played about it. Through the casements he saw the staring walls lighted again. The words of the dead sheep-herder came back and he waited for graceful figures to weave past the burning windows to the trembling rhythm of the storm. He stood only for a moment. Then he lowered the sash, stepped away from the dead man and going back into the office, sat down at his table with his head between his hands.

II

THE chief despatcher, Martin Duffy—this is the same man who is digging the Panama Canal—called Hughie up on the wire and began talking with him as soon as he received his letter of resignation. "You don't know your own mind," declared Martin Duffy, sending his annoyance fast, because the furtive liking he had for the boy made him the more solicitous. "Take off your head and pound it, Hughie. Your uncle won't like this. You are in line for a better thing. Just as soon as we can get a man to take Point of Rocks you are to come in and take an East-end trick under me. I've been keeping it as a surprise. Just hold your horses thirty days, and see what will happen."

"It may well be," returned Hughie over the wire in dry reply, "but that is just the point: I don't want anything to happen—leastwise, not anything at Point of Rocks."

"Hold your horses thirty days, will you?" retorted Martin Duffy, who when incensed always said "horses" with a hiss.

"I can hold my horses for thirty days," returned Hughie, always impudent and already clever at a key, "but who will hold them for thirty nights? Forty-second Street and slavery for life for mine, Mr. Duffy, if I can't get away from this job."

However, Hughie held on as he had been told to and nothing whatever happened either at Point of Rocks or elsewhere. But he realized uncomfortably that Point of Rocks was getting on his nerves, and when the desert really does get on a man's nerves, it is time to get out. He was already conscious that he was overstaying his leave, and but for Duffy he never could have been persuaded to hang on. The nights grew lonelier and lonelier. But just as they had become unbearable he got the long-awaited reprieve—orders to report at Medicine Bend on the 1st of September for the despatcher's trick. It was then the 30th of August.

Since the storm the desert nights had seemed never so peaceful. Hughie felt ashamed of himself almost as soon as he knew he was going to leave. For nearly a month there had not been a cloud in the evening sky—just the clear lilies or roses of the sunset streaming into a high salmon field; then, purple; gray patches of dusk, and over all a lighting of stars.

At dawn it was the very same: one morning prettier than the other. Hughie began to realize he should lose something in leaving the desert. That night, the last but one, he was sneakingly sorry to go. The whole evening went to getting up his reports, and when he looked at the clock the east-bound passenger was due. Hughie had no orders for it, but the engineman stopped that night to tighten a nut, and the conductor came in to congratulate the boy on his promotion; also to give him a cigar instead of stealing one, and to beg Hughie to remember him when he came into the seats of the mighty—not to leave him lying out long hours at Point of Rocks on cold nights waiting for orders. Hughie had already promised everybody the best of every thing, and after the conductor signalled and the long string of Pullmans drew past the station into the eastern night, he watched the lights vanish upon the distant tangent feeling content with himself and the world.

III

THE lamp had burned bad all evening. After the train was gone Hughie stopped poking at the wick. His reports were up and

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signed, and he had finished a long letter home when he remembered that in his report to the express company he had forgotten, under the head of "Unusual Incidents," to note the death of the sheep-herder and the fact of the body's being brought into the station and left all night in the waiting-room. By keeping a record of such events the company sometimes developed clues to thefts, robberies, and other unpleasant happenings. While Hughie felt certain that there could be no after-clap to this affair, since the dead man had been taken away and duly buried, it was a part of the routine work to make up the record, and he began a brief account of the matter.

As he wrote, the night of the death came back. The storm presented itself, and so vividly that he hesitated at times for words. His thoughts crowded fast one on another. It was what there was in his recollections to leave out that bothered him; things indefinable but things creepy to think about. He stopped his writing for a moment and took the chimney from the lamp to poke the ill wick with his pen. Through the open doors the south wind, fanning the uncertain flame, caused it to flare suddenly, and as he put back the chimney he heard the office door behind him close. The wind often closed or opened the door and the south wind was a kindly companion, blowing for hours together with the same gentle swiftness over the desert wastes. Hughie wrote the last words of his report. Just as he pressed the blotter down upon the signature he became aware of an odd sensation; an impression that he was no longer alone in the room.

He passed his fingers mechanically across the blotter-pad waiting for the impression to pass. Instead, an almost imperceptible shiver ran up his back. He rubbed the blotter more firmly, almost officiously, but with the growing conviction that someone else was in the room, and soon the difficulty was to stop the rubbing. When he did lay the pad aside a faint moisture suffused his forehead. He wanted then to open the door that he had heard close, but to do it he should be compelled to turn around. This required an effort, and he tried to summon the resolve. He looked at the lamp—it burned brightly. The moisture cooled on his forehead; the signature he had just blotted lay under his eyes. He recognized it perfectly and felt sure he was awake. He was even conscious that his hands were growing cold, and he put them up to his head; what it cost mentally to do even this surprised him. He could not look around. He attempted to whistle softly and had almost shamed himself out of a fear he felt to be ridiculous when he was stunned by a voice at his very side: "Should you like to have your grave dug out here under the stars?"

The words were distinct. Hughie froze to his chair. If the tones were soft they were perfectly clear, and the words were already stamped on his consciousness. What did it mean? Could it be the voice of a living creature? Of a woman? No woman lived within twenty miles of Point of Rocks—no living creature with a voice such as that within a hundred miles. He heard it again:

"Your grave will be under the stars."

Hughie's fingers moved, but beyond that he sat paralyzed, and his tongue clove dry to the roof of his mouth. He knew now that an unreal presence had come upon him. He knew, too, that in the mountains men went mad of mere loneliness, and faint with horror, he clutched his temples, waiting every instant for reason to leave.

"The stars are singing for us to-night." With these words, spoken softly and almost in his ear, something touched his shoulder. The touch went through him like needles, and he sprang like a madman from his chair.

He whirled and cried out in a cracked voice. A figure shrank quickly away—a woman's figure, seemingly, with a shadowy face and loosened hair. When he could realize that he really saw something the head was averted and he could remember only a glimpse of startled eyes. The apparition, with hands outstretched, was moving toward the door. He heard a suppressed utterance, "I cannot find my grave."

The voice was too human. "Who are you?" cried the operator in desperation. "Why are you here?"

"I cannot find my grave."

"I—I haven't got it," stammered Hughie, with hair on end.

The figure shrank farther away. In the dim light he could see outlines of loosened draperies and falling hair. It already seemed as if the ghost were more frightened, if possible, than he, and his scattered faculties began to act. The figure moved toward the door and laid a white hand on the

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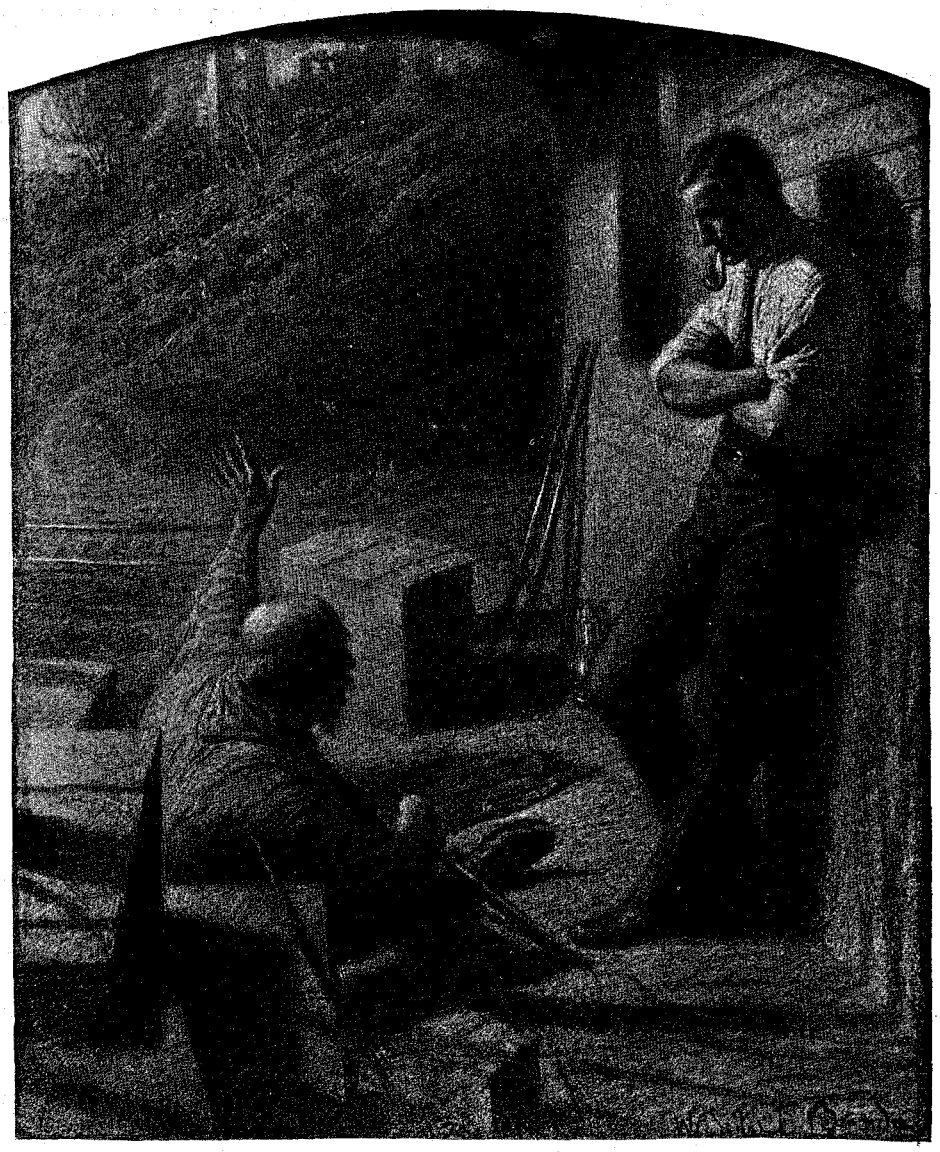

"Watch them windows over on the hill."—Page 161.

knob, but could not turn it. Hughie saw that the spring lock would hold the door and the helplessness of his unreal visitor inspired courage. If it was a woman she was trying painfully to open the door. Hughie took a cautious step. There was no longer any thought of a vision in his mind; the clock was ticking loudly, the sounder clicked at intervals on the table and his heart beat fast and heavily. He was awake, and whether living or dead, a woman was standing before him. If she had not dropped from the stars, how could she have come? There had not been the slightest warning of an approach save the closing of the door—no wagon rattle from some far-off ranch, no sound of horses' hoofs, and as for walking, there was no place to walk from. Even believing her to be a living creature, there was something unnatural in her manner. She inspired fear. When she put her hands to her face a shiver passed over him. When

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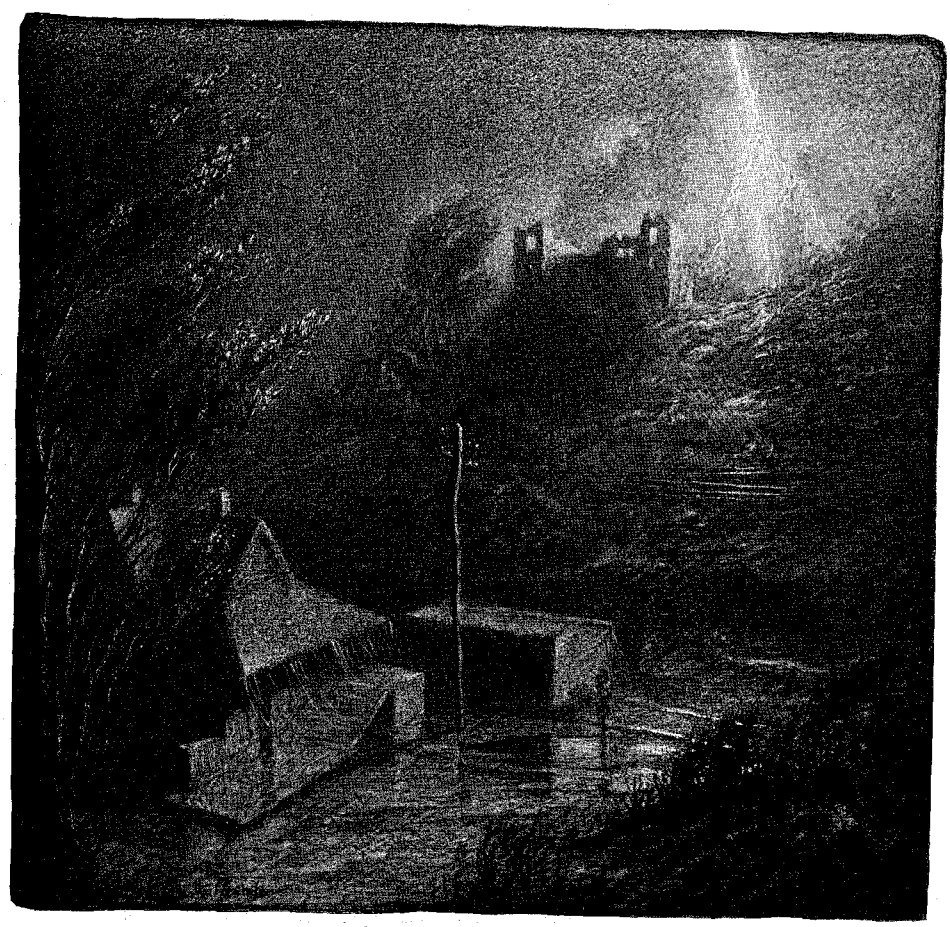
she moved, her feet gave forth no sound. Hesitating between the fear of what the wildest surmise could not explain and the conviction that this must be a reality, Hughie heard a sob and pity moved him.

"I will let you out," he exclaimed unsteadily. Watching his visitor narrowly as he stepped forward, he released the spring-bolt. In doing so he saw her face.

Failing to see that he held the knob in his hand, she put forward her own to reach it. Her fingers touched his, and he knew that he faced a creature of flesh and blood. He released the lock. "Shall I let you out?"

She looked helplessly before her and her voice trembled. "It is cold."

He closed the door. "It *is* cold," he echoed. "How did you come here?"



Down came the storm from the high mountains.—Page 162.

A shock checked him and a new fear overcame him. What mystery could this be? It was the face of the broken miniature. The head, as he now saw it, was bent and the eyes were drooping, but the high cheeks, the lines of the hair falling over the temples, the straight nose, and the curving side mouth. With the certainty of an acute memory the operator knew it all. He collected himself and spoke again. "Shall I let you out?"

She drew timidly back. "What is your name?" he persisted.

"It is so cold."

To none of his questions could she give an answer. She spoke like one in a trance; at times trying pathetically to put back her loosened hair, pleading at times to be let go and shrinking in fear from her companion, who found himself now the protector of his unaccountable apparition. He continued

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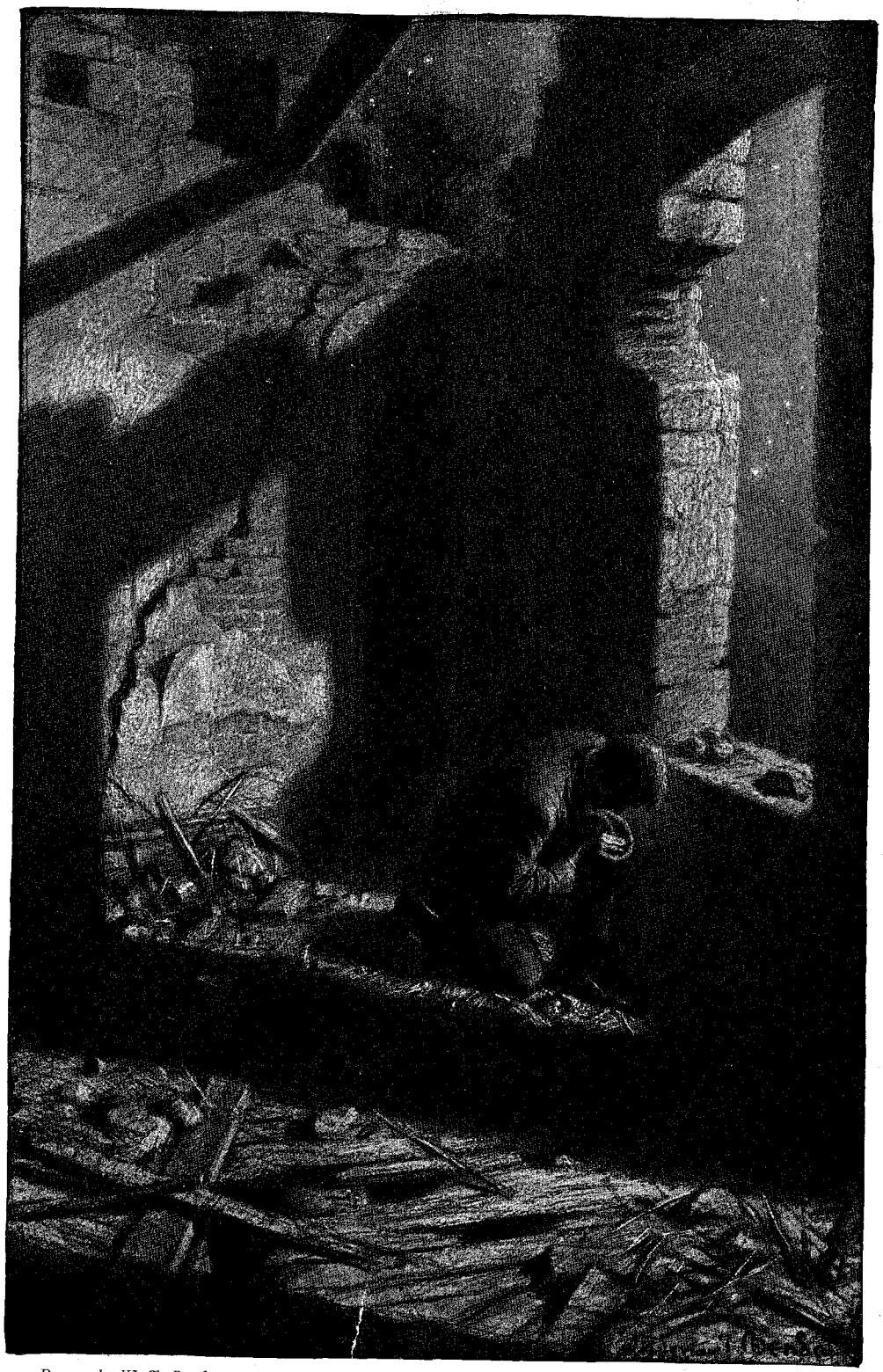

Drawn by W. T. Benda.

Hughie picked the something up. It was a broken ivory miniature.—Page 161.

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to speak and with growing excitement, to all of which the strange visitor appeared insensible. He saw very soon that he was unnecessarily frightening his ghost, and he presently stood silent with his hands on the back of a surprised chair, waiting for his visitor to make the next move herself.

She had, so far as he could ever remember afterward, but two coherent movements; either her eyes sought in hope the light of his lamp or turned from it in despair. This much, at least, was intelligible, even if incomprehensible. Not until he saw her falter, put her hands blindly out and sink to the floor did he realize that she was ill and in distress. Too excited to breathe as he took her in his arms, he lifted her up and placed her inert upon a chair. She opened her eyes in a moment. A chill passed over her. Hughie threw open the drafts of the stove and chafed her hands. Something of gratitude seemed to move her, for as she shrank into the chair she looked at him with less of fear. He sat down then himself, and facing her, tried with his hands on his knees to inspire confidence. She would not talk. Instead, as the fire in the stove blazed up and the heat diffused itself she showed unmistakable drowsiness and added the last straw to Hughie's embarrassment by asking him why he did not go to bed. He tried to explain that he went to bed in the daytime. His apparition was too far overcome by the warmth to comprehend, but an inspiration seized him. He asked if she would rest for a while on the long table at the back of the room. She opposed nothing that he suggested, and he took the cushion of his chair for a pillow and helped her as well as he could to lie down on the table. When he had done this he went back to his end of the room and watched the dim corner beyond the stove. His charge, for he now made her such, lay perfectly quiet, and when she breathed regularly he took his overcoat from the nail behind the door, tiptoed over to the corner, and laid it across her shoulders. It had been a swagger coat at school, but was short for a coverlet. Still, it served, and as he walked back better satisfied to his chair he heard a rapid clicking from the sounder. The train despatcher at Medicine Bend was sending the 19—the imperative call from headquarters to clear the line for the despatcher's office—and every night operator on the division was getting out of his way. As soon as the wire was free a station call came, and to Hughie's surprise it was for Point of Rocks. He answered instantly, and the message came so fast he could hardly write it.

"Passenger missing from Chicago sleeper on Train Number Two—a young Englishwoman. Is believed to be somewhere between Castle Creek and Point of Rocks. Get your section men out quick with lights and hand-cars and with orders to stay out till they find her. Name, Grace Swinton. Answer quick."

The chief despatcher's initials were appended. Hughie Morrison sent his answer straightway.

"Unnecessary to call out the men. I have the missing passenger. She is asleep here in the office. Instruct."

"Good boy, Hughie," returned the pleased despatcher. "Hold her for special car and engine from here running as second Number One. Make her as comfortable in every way as possible. Get whole story. If injured in any way notify office of Whispering Smith."

Hughie Morrison, turning from the key, drew a breath. It was his last night at Point of Rocks. He looked with curious feelings into the dim corner where the missing passenger lay. He turned in his chair again and again, but she did not move. He adjusted and readjusted the drafts of the stove, noisily and at times officiously, but her soft, regular breathing never varied and day broke on a face upon the table as delicate as ivory and the operator in despair for a sign of awakening.

First Number Two, the regular train, came and went, with every man of the train and engine crews peering furtively into the shaded corner at Hughie Morrison's ghost, but Hughie waved them away and knew that the Special to bear her away would follow all too soon. When it drew in, bringing the superintendent's car, he was ready to rebel against his orders and disposed to hold the ghost against all comers. But with careful tread they brought in heavy blankets, and as Grace Swinton lay wrapped her in them and carried her, sleeping heavily, to the car, regardless of Hughie's protests that they ought at least to wait till he had got her story from her own lips. They asked for orders, got them almost at once, and puffed noisily away for

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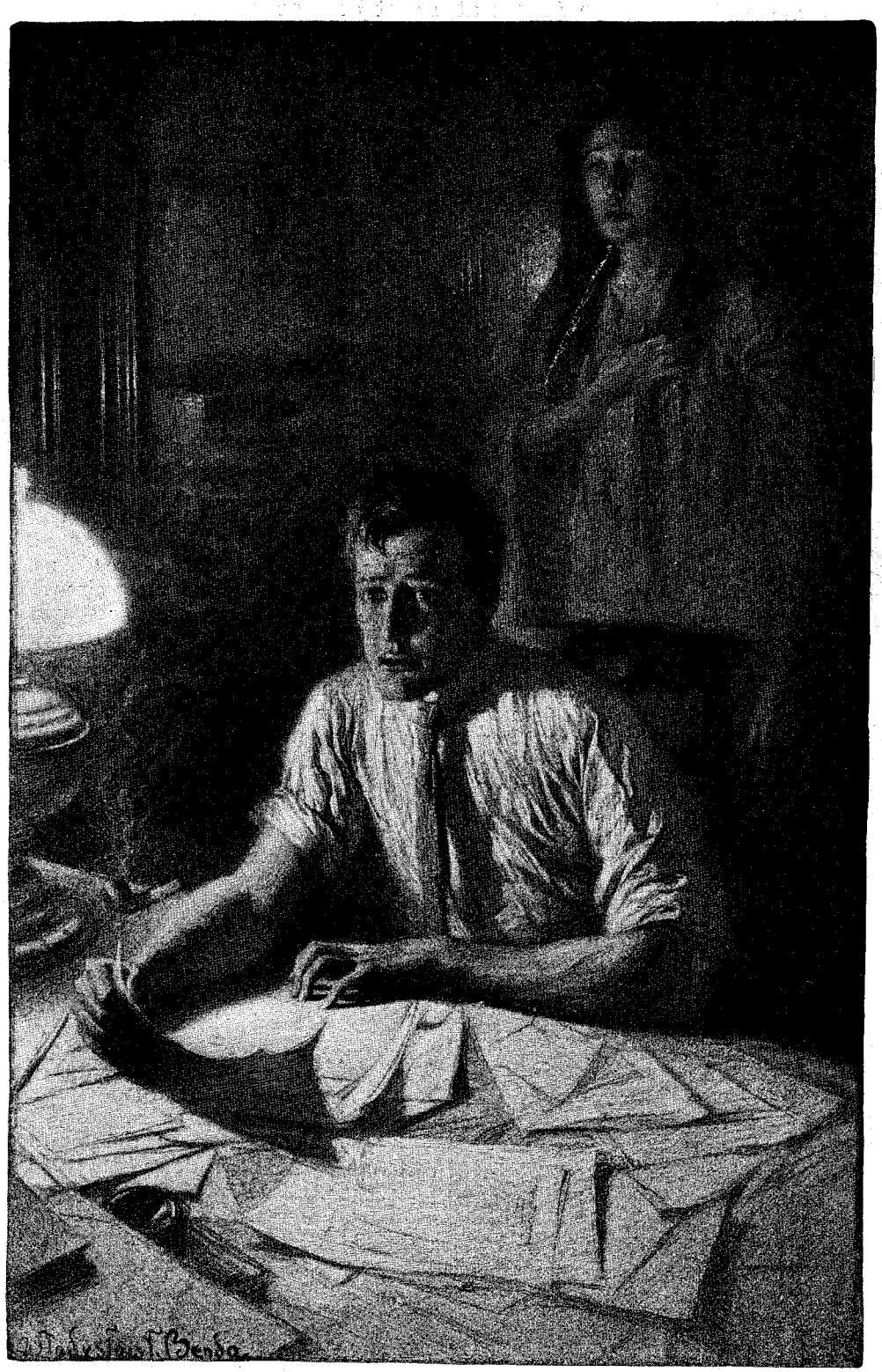

Drawn by W. T. Benda.

"Your grave will be under the stars."—Page 164.

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Medicine Bend. When they were gone Hughie folded his papers; he was all ready to say good-by to Point of Rocks.

VI

THE promotion had come. After all, it was not exciting. Indeed, nothing excited Hughie any more. Martin Duffy was the most crestfallen man, save one, on the division over having picked Hughie for a despatcher, that one being the new despatcher himself. The change that had come over the president's nephew was the common talk of the trainmen. His alertness, the light play of his humor, the grasp that met the little desert emergencies at Point of Rocks with the ease of a veteran—where were they? As to the night with the ghost, nobody gave that any consideration, because where things happen all the time, and where everything that happens is unusual, an incident holds the stage only for its fleeting instant. Hughie himself felt the situation keenly. He even asked to be relieved, but Martin Duffy was above all things not a quitter. "Don't commit suicide," he growled. "You're in a funk, that is all. I pulled a woman once from in front of a locomotive. What do you think she did? Sent me a cross-stitched waistcoat and a copy of 'The Simple Life.' Wouldn't that kill you? And I've wanted a meerschaum pipe for twenty years."

The advice was good, and Hughie swallowed it, as a fool should, with disgust and humility. But Martin Duffy usually caused things to happen, and this time proved no exception. When the new despatcher walked into the office just before twelve o'clock that night for his trick, the mail from Number One was being distributed and a letter, small but plump-looking, bearing a foreign postmark and addressed in a clear, firm hand to Hughie Morrison, was laid before him. He cut open the envelope with feverish haste and began to read. Line after line and page after page slipped past the lightning of his eyes, and one would have said that the play of his mental fire had quite come back. This was the letter that it should be. This was the story, her own story with its frank account of the long illness that had first shown itself during an overland railroad journey in America; here were the prettily chosen expressions of gratitude—all that the greediest Princeton man could ask for, and Hughie was greedy—thanking him for the delicate kindnesses she said he had shown to her during her night of trance and terror on the desert. Hughie, unable to read and breathe at the same time, sat down. The desert came back; the stillness of the wind and the glory of the stars, the stealing fear, the shock, and now the grip of the eagerly waited letter.

"I had come from the coast," she wrote, "and was bringing home from California my invalid brother. He was then, and is still very ill. The worry of providing for his journey and the fear that I might not be able to bring him home alive had worn upon me until I was in but little better condition, I fear, than he.

"How I ever came to leave my berth in my sleep and to walk asleep straight out of our sleeping-car when the train stopped that night at Point of Rocks I cannot, of course, explain. But the doctor has since told me that in crossing the Rocky Mountains the altitude is often accountable for strange things that people do. When I reached home after the ocean voyage I was already ill of brain fever—less, I suppose, could hardly have been looked for—and my recovery has been very slow. But for your delicate consideration in that night of delirium I should probably never have recovered at all. Wandering as I did over the open country around the station in the cold of those dreadful hours of unconsciousness, I seem faintly to remember seeing the light in your window—the only light, I was afterward told, within many, many miles. And I want now to apologize with all humility for breaking in upon your solitude at so unearthly an hour and in so forlorn a condition. If at any time hereafter, you should ever be in England, I hope you will surely come to Ormonde Road, Richmond. You will find us at The Knolls, and it will give me a chance to tell you in person how grateful I am for all you did for me. It will surprise you very much, I know, to learn that I myself once really lived at Point of Rocks, but it was years ago, during my childhood. An uncle of mine had cattle ranches in that country, and built a large house near the Point, which afterward burned. As a little girl I lived with my aunt, and I often played with my dolls among the very rocks near the railroad station.

The letter bore the signature of Grace Swinton. Hughie Morrison brought his

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hand down on the table and a new light shone in his face. His resolve was taken. Saint George and Merry England was the watchword, whether it forever blasted hopes of promotion or not. He began his eight-hour trick on the instant that night and did the best work with the trains he had done since his promotion. Moreover, he found time to write a letter and start it at six o'clock that morning on Grace Swinton's own train, as he called Number Two, to The Knolls, in Ormonde Road, Richmond, explaining how he had happened to be sent to Point of Rocks—with incidental mention that he had long known of her having lived there. And mention, too, of a broken miniature and of one surviving doll that she might, he hoped, still be interested in.

The figure moved toward the door and laid a white hand on the knob.—Page 164.

Inquiries mutually began could not, of course, be satisfied at so long distance with

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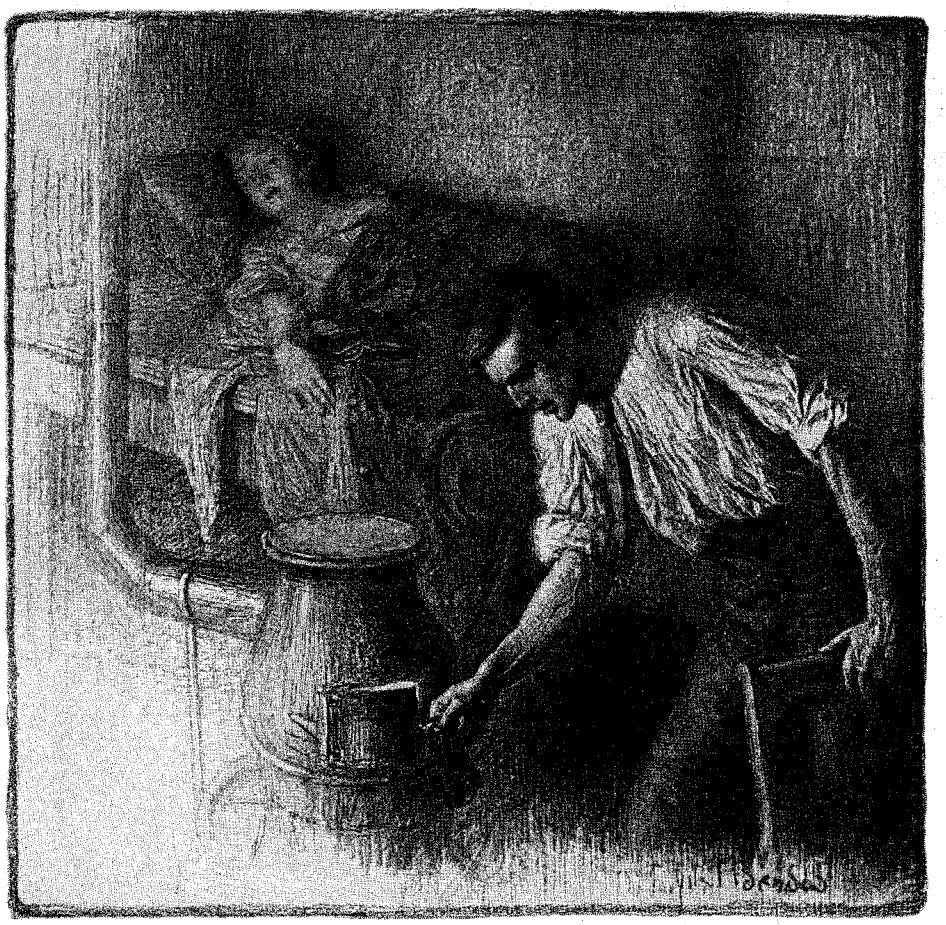
a single exchange of letters. When Bucks heard the story he seemed more pleased than he ever had been with a relative in his life, and to Hughie's surprise, gave the six months' leave asked for the trip to England and The Knolls without a word of reproach.

their singing; the journey made by President Bucks to inspect the English railways and to be present at The Knolls at his nephew, Hughie Morrison's, wedding — all this would make a chapter told too often in the traditions of the Mountain



He adjusted and readjusted the drafts of the stove.—Page 168.

But an account of that trip with its surprises, with the international complications that followed, with Hughie's questions as to whether the stars really had sung on the desert that night and Grace Swinton's denials as to ever having said anything about

Division. What is of importance is that Hughie, being now general manager of the coast lines, is stationed where his English bride—having lived in the Rocky Mountains as a little girl—professes to feel entirely at home.

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LASCAR

By Hugh Johnson

ILLUSTRATIONS BY N. C. WYETH

THIS is a matter of Fort Perdido routine; drill call sounds from headquarters and a leathery, gray-haired soldier, chiefly noticeable for his gaunt, unlovely mount and his ferocious wire tangle of mustache, trots up the line, leading a prancing thoroughbred; he halts at a set of captain's quarters, there is a great sound of dragging spurs, the clank and bang of an absurdly long sabre against lintel, veranda, and sidewalk, and with the air of a swash-buckling buccaneer, Capt. Wendel Benner, veteran of six campaigns and some thirty battles, skirmishes, and engagements, and the embodied spirit of the Nth United States Horse, swaggers into view. Tall, rangy, and gray he is, and you may look from him to Danvers and be convinced that long association affects mutual resemblance, for, from the top of their closely cropped heads to the toes of their military boots, they appear as a service-worn man and his reflection in a discriminating mirror.

"Sir," reports the one on such occasion, "the captain's horse is saddled and his orderly awaits instructions," and quickly steps forward to take the polished stirrup. This action is always vehemently rebuked.

"Out of that, my man; out of that. I do not require any such flunkeying service, and when I do I shall not attend formations."

This is not a conversation; it is a formula for morning drill, and officers of the Nth declare that it was devised by Danvers to gratify the sentiment that it imputes to his aging captain, for they both mount with pathetic stiffness and trot to "L" Troop's parade.

What the third member of the Nth's devoted trio thinks of this morning mummery he does not deign to express; he stretches out his attenuated neck and follows rheumatically in the dusty wake of the thoroughbred, for Lascar, too, has seen his day, and his escapes from Mescalero roasting fires are as nothing compared to his present ones from condemnation.

The Nth is full of traditions; it claims the wholly unauthorized privilege of yellow neck-scarfs and leather re-enforced riding-breeches, but these are so incidental to Benner, Danvers, and Lascar as to be completely forgotten when the regiment is mentioned. They have been an integral part of it for time out of mind and its record would be a dry recital of yearly routine if stripped of the incidents in which they have participated.

All this explains the interest that was displayed at evening stables in the fag-end of an exciting pay-day. Grooming was demoralized and the men were rubbing vigorously small sections of glossy hide that they had rubbed so for minutes, their eyes were fixed on the end of the line, where Danvers was caressing Lascar with picturesque terms of endearment. As usual, on pay-days, he was unobtrusively, good-naturedly drunk.

"You ol' cabbage-nipper," he was saying, "I'd polish you off till a fly couldn't light on you 'thout slippin' an breakin' his neck, but the army is goin' to the dogs an' I'd be in the mill an' you wouldn't care a parsnip, you hide-boun' waggon-puller——"

The man next him gouged him in the ribs with his elbow.

"Cheese it—lootenant's comin'," he warned.

But Danvers had privileges and knew them. He raised his voice.

"Yes, the army's goin' to the dogs, an' they's lettin' pasty-faced little recrootin' picters go a-orderin' the likes o' us about an' you don't seem to give a snort whether you're superyerorficered by a spavined burro 'r not, you ewe-necked ol' darlin', you."

The spick-and-span creased bundle of a first lieutenant blushed as red as a love-apple and turned his face away like the generous young gentleman that he was. But the captain called Danvers to the orderly room and lectured him for the better part of an hour with all the pomposity that was his right by immemorial prescription. After the last pretentious sentence Danvers saluted with exaggerated flourish and pre-

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pared to about-face when the gray man who sat before him had returned it, as had been his custom on such too-frequent occasions. But the gray man was looking at him quizzically and, with more emotion than he had shown in some twenty years of service, poorly disguised by a testy growl from behind his own wire tangle that he was now pulling furiously, asked:

"My man, how long is it now that I have coddled you along like a swaddled baby?" And before Danvers could speak he had supplied his own answer: "Gad—it's twenty years—dem swaddled baby, sir—swaddled baby." He had a way of repeating words that struck him as being apt, and just now he was in need of expletives and talk-filling, for he and the regiment and Danvers knew of certain other coddling—respectful, distant, disguised coddling, but coddling none the less. "Twenty years that you've been saddling my horse and making my bed"—and with an access of fierceness—"and making a disgraceful exhibition of yourself for two days every month. What have you to say for yourself? Out with it, sir." During an interspersion of snorting monosyllables Danvers said nothing for himself, which was what was expected of him.

The captain seized half the wire tangle between his square teeth and nearly obliterated it in his supreme effort.

"Danvers, I'm going away from the regiment—I'm going on a four-year paymaster detail—Stop wriggling your fingers!" (Danvers fingers had been motionless.) "What I want to know is—who in the infernal is going to keep your dem worthless hide out of the Leavenworth prison?"

It was the first time he had bandied personalities since Recruit Danvers led his brand-new lieutenant's horse up the line at old Fort Davis for his initial drill with "L" Troop, and with the sudden slight paling of his leathery face Danvers looked shocked.

"Sir, I—sir, the captain——" he began, but

"Speak when you're spoken to, sir!" with characteristic inconsistency interrupted him and placed them both on familiar ground.

This was their complete felicitation on the new life of each and their final farewell. Danvers spoke of it once, and then it was mumbled into a slender, pointed ear through a curtain of coarse, thick mane, for in matters pertaining to his captain he had one confidant. This one comforted him as he might and sniffed down the seam in the back of his khaki coat and thrust a soft muzzle into his pocket.

"No, you ol' hay-mattress, I didn' bring you no goodies, 'ceptin' the bread a sorrow an' the waters a marrow, 'cause it's you to the bone-yard an' me to the jim-jams an' the army to the eternal bow-wows—ol' cart-horse." Lascar rubbed his forehead on Danvers's breast buttons and nipped him gently with worn teeth in token of approval. "You're an unfeelin' ol' caribou, an' you ain't no more innards a compassion 'n a saw-horse," he continued, and Lascar understood completely and nuzzled close in sympathy.

The captain's fears and Danvers' predictions were not without foundation. The new lieutenant had a brown Filipino *muchacho*, who knew the intricacies of English polo-saddles and fly-books, and who understood the art of drawing baths and preparing white uniforms and laying out clean linen in just the right place. He was not above kneeling and unstrapping pigskin puttees from tired legs and replacing them with grateful *cinelas* and Japanese kimonos, and before all this Danvers's formal dignified care of an old-mannered troop commander was neither required nor desired. On the morning after his captain left he began his first day's full duty for many a year. This included the abnegation of many privileges that he had long considered rights, and he grumbled and grew sullen.

Moreover, the spick-and-span lieutenant could never quite forget about the spavined burro and he was young and ambitious and believed that if the army lay in danger of immediate dissolution it would be found in the direction of favoritism—he had written a short pamphlet on this very subject, in fact—and he was determined in all things to be firm and uncompromising. In a little red note-book that he carried about in his breast pocket was an entry for the next I. & I. report that read: "Lascar—L. N. —42, Dark chestnut;—ring-bone spavin, malnutrition, old," etc., etc., until the entry looked like a veterinarian's list of equine ills, for on each occasion that Danvers's obsessions brought him to the orderly room a new disability of Lascar's seemed to present itself to the lieutenant's mind.

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When at length, the inspector did come to Perdido, he made short shrift of one ancient troop horse. He was a broad-jawed man with a high, narrow forehead and a porcine eye. He glanced from the I. &. I report to the stiff-kneed mount.

"H'm — ah — h'm," he commented. "What'd you keep him so long for, Mr. Wunbar?" he asked suspiciously.

"I didn't, sir; this is Captain Benner's troop."

"H'm—ah—h'm," he said, as a good inspector should, and he made a furious lead-pencilled note and looked mysterious.

At the ensuing auction of outlaws and worn-out quartermaster mules Lascar was tied to a fence and almost forgotten. There is an element of pathos in the heartless sales of service-worn animals, and a general once, who believed and wrote and practised that war is anything but pleasant, signed the most remarkable order in the files of the Department, to his everlasting credit, be it said, for it saved to comfortable senility a mule of many battles. But there was no reprieve for Lascar. The horse-traders from San Antonio and the parasites of Fort Perdido glanced once along his corrugated sides and squatted cross-legged on the ground while the auctioneer cried the bid of a disreputable Mexican wood-chopper against that of a Jew peddler to the amount of seven dollars and thirty-five cents, when the peddler shrugged his shoulders and backed off through the laughing circle of onlookers.

Sprightly young "L" Troop horses had the grace to follow him along the corral fence as far as they could when the Mexican was leading him toward the bridge and out in the tall blue-stem that fringed the creek edge, a very drunk old soldier lay, face downward, on the earth and dug his fingers knuckle-deep into the damp sand as the "plunk—plunk—plunk" of iron-rimmed hoofs hollowed from the bridge and echoed between the stream-banks.

If Danvers had been stripped of a certain distinction when he retrograded from the position of captain's man to the status of plain Private Danvers, whose kit was numbered 42, who got drunk on pay—and other —days, and who rode the equine hero of the troop, he dropped to the colorless insignificance of a troop scapegrace when Lascar was sold.

Certain boy-face corporals who were proud of nice flat backs and nice soldierly set-ups and who answered with flippancy the questions in the frippy little non-com's school, took occasion now to correct deficiencies in Danvers's conduct as a cavalry trooper. It is quite true that these same corporals were puling in their mothers' arms when young Danvers was riding over the White Mountains of Arizona while "L" Troop went out on heart-breaking marches in the wake of fantastically painted Apaches, and it is also true that Danvers turned on them quite suddenly, to the uproarious delight of the entire troop.

"Why—you pimply-face, little tin image," he roared, "you herring-backed, horse-bluffed recruit, you—you—you *bot-fly*, I've wore more skin off a me on my saddle 'n ud make a regiment a boneless mounted marines like you, an' if you ever talk to me ag'in about bein' a cavalry sodger, I'll—I'll wipe out my carbine-bore 'uth you—that's what I'll do 'uth you."

The outraged non-com. took his grievance to his already outraged officer, and Danvers faced long and verbose charges.

"Why, colonel," he said in answer to questions, "I jus' couldn' help it. I'm old enough to be the mother a this yere shrimp, an' I c'n stan' mos' anything but bein' tol' how to sodger by them childern."

The colonel was a new colonel who knew not Danvers, and he looked at him severely over his spectacles and sent him to the guard-house, where he worked on a shift with a colored infantry prisoner and a discharged degenerate. Danvers was completely broken, and not the least of his sorrows was the lack of a thin, glossy neck for the feel of his arms and a soft, sensitive muzzle to nose in his pockets and to caress his shoulder and a ready ear in which to pour his woes, for he had never told them to any person else.

When his short sentence was fulfilled he came back to the squad-room, beat a tattoo on his locker-lid with a clubbed marching shoe, and dared any man in the troop to speak to him or encroach on his little allotment of floor space. This was because Danvers was drunk—not good-naturedly and more or less wittily drunk as always before, but surlily, nastily, drunk. He had sold the Apache war-bonnet that had hung above his bunk for years and was really a thing of value, and had received in return

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numbers of flat flasks of poisonous white *mescal*, that he kept beneath his mattress cover and visited at alarming intervals. His gait was steady and his face pale, but the stuff harried up his fancies and gave him the brain of a sullen madman. He spoke little and ate nothing and his debauch had endured a week when the paymaster made his monthly visit to Perdido.

It is always a season of rejoicing in the parasitic little Texas town, this visit—Perdido's monthly harvest, they call it—and bad men and worse women from miles around come in to gather the gleanings. There was wild revelry for two days at this one. The thirteen "saloons and dance-halls" glared with lights. Dishonest little balls that clattered around alluringly numbered circles, bowls that spun out the results of perennial races between crudely painted horses on an oil-cloth table-top, faro, and monte were the instruments, and barefaced chicanery was the spirit by which Fort Perdido soldiery was stripped of its month's wage. Now, in the days of the decent canteen— But, no matter.

Into the town came Danvers, unusually drunk and more than unusually taciturn. The boy-faced corporal had mistaken surly silence for wordless penitence, but Danvers was not troubled by remorse. He played monte without method or reason and he cashed in a pile of chips whose size caused the cashier to gasp with amazement. Credulous recruits opened wide eyes and handed over their pathetic dollars so eagerly that the monte dealer had difficulty in receiving all of them, but managed it with an effort. There was one little *contretemps* while Danvers played. The man who stood next him had seen his hairy hand shoot across the table and grasp the wrist of the brazen youth who dealt.

"Don't you try that on *me*, you haoun," he hoarsed, and beneath his grip an unaccounted card fluttered to the table. Information as to this occurrence relieved the mind of the perplexed cashier, but conveyed no ideas to the recruits.

When morning came Danvers was gone and the boy-faced corporal spoke feelingly to the lieutenant. Danvers's most serviceable clothes were not in his locker. The Morning Report said "absent without leave," but "L" Troop confidentially whispered "desertion" and the spick-and-span lieutenant could not fight completely off a feeling strangely like remorse.

Capt. Wendel Benner is famous in the army as an officer of cavalry, but even he will admit that he is emphatically not a paymaster. His accounts for the first month cost him more than six of his own vouchers represented, and though the General and the entire Department Staff revelled in late office-hours, at six each morning his eyes popped open very much as they had done for the preceding twenty years, and no amount of tossing about on his bed would induce them to pop shut again. If he rose he was lonesome, and if he continued to toss he was miserable. He could plainly hear the service trumpet calls in the cavalry post across the wall, and they kept him in a state of nervous expectancy for something that never, by any chance, happened. What was truly the reason for all this, and what he would not have admitted for great moneys was that he missed the sound of horses' feet at his front door and the rusty voice and stilted actions of a certain old trooper very delicately, very formally, and yet withal, most lovingly assuring him that he was still young and active and that, after all, the new and annoying vagaries of an ambitious young army he was still *the* Wendel Benner of the Nth, United States Horse.

He fumed through the first month and blustered through the second; before the end of the third he wrote a jerky, imperative letter and demanded to be relieved. It went ricocheting up the usual bone-dry channels and the chief of each successive office grew angry as he read the bombastic, heavily written sentences searched furiously for the signature of one who had so presumed, found it, sighed gently and smiled, as he wrote what each chief before him had written. On a certain December morning when the air was crisp with winter and goodwill, an erstwhile paymaster of the Department of the Shoshone said his good-bys to grinning young aides and patronizing department chiefs and caught the earliest train he knew for Perdido and the grumbling, happy life he loved.

Early trains are sometimes disappointing. Benner's was side-tracked at a little station on the Rio Grande and the conductor dared tell him that it would be there for hours. He was singularly resigned; on the south-

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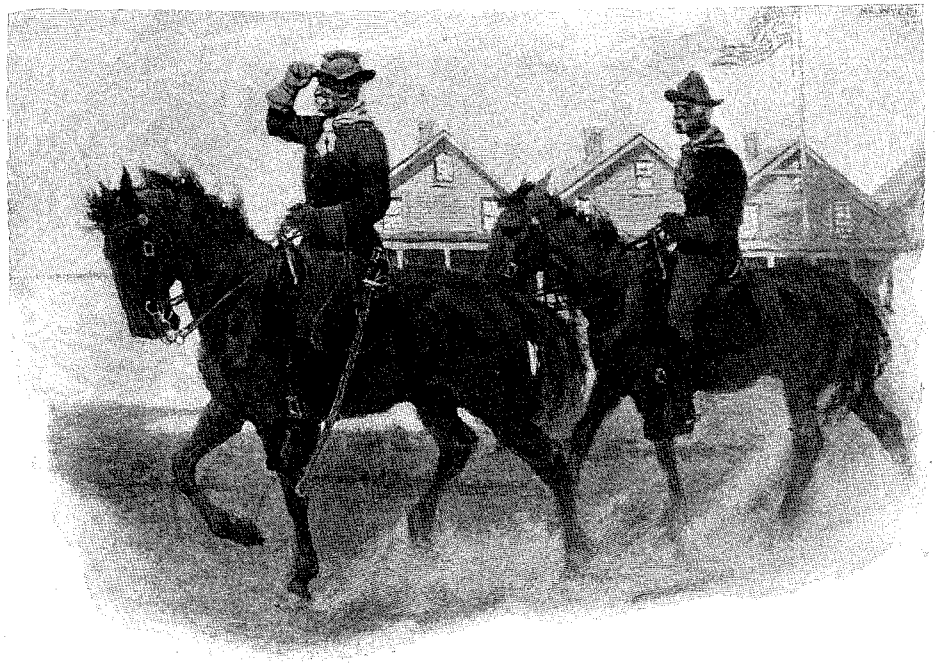

The Captain and Danvers.—Page 173.

ern trip from California an officer of the old army is apt not to grudge the loss of hours promised by the too-sanguine schedule. From his car window he can see Fort Bliss and the ragged jumble of peaked blue hills toward Huachuca. There is the Langtry of Roy Bean and the streaked water-tank that stood like a harbinger of hope in the dreariness of the early Apache wars. If there were nothing else, there is the great parched waste itself, where he and the men who were dearer to him than brothers suffered and were glad together, and he is prone to people it with phantom guidons and dusty troops that trot strangely by the train-side and look in at him and smile. Benner had sat long at the car-windows with tilted cap and far-away eyes, and now he looked across at the barren sky-line of Mexico and saw that it had changed not at all in so many years. He remembered intimate little things that had transpired at this very station, and was content.

There was a flaring poster on an unpainted wall that told in glowing terms of a *fiesta* in the Mexican town across the river, and in the boldest type of all stood out the magic name of "Chico," *espada grande* of Mexico and darling of admiring hearts from Yucatan to the river. It was to be a marvellous fight, four-bulls-four, and the poster spoke volumes for Yankee influence. Benner grinned at it; he knew all about these border bull fights, but—well, the time must be passed somehow, and—oh, yes—he wondered if Antoine, Mexican-Frenchman of other days, still ruled the straggling, dirty town from his greasy bar in the market. That knowledge alone was worth while, and he crossed the bridge.

Antoine was there. The day was sweltering, even for Mexican December, but in his seal-skin cap, his flowered waistcoat, and wine-flecked expanse of shirt-front, he was the same Antoine; he prevaricated graciously and remembered Benner, *parfaitment*. The bull-fight—oh, we old ones, we know. But certainly, if the Señor Captain wished it, he would go with *mucho gusto*.

The rickety, wooden amphitheatre was packed to overflowing with brown-skinned enthusiasts, who kept silent only while the asthmatic band of the Such-and-Such Regiment blew jumbled notes from their highly tarnished instruments and drowned human opposition. The weazened, bemedalled chief musician bowed extravagantly at each momentary breathing space, whether the

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crowd cheered or not, and the assemblage was thoroughly and odoriferously Mexican. The ring was small, and even here were signs of Americanization: on the wooden shields that announced to frenzied bull or fleeting toreador that Jose Pradillo, beyond shadow of doubt, held for sale the *most* superlative stock of general merchandise in the entire *ciudad*, and that he and his entire family were at the disposition of *Ustedes*. Benner's seats were *umbra* and fifty *centavos* more convenient than the *sol* ones at his feet.

The long, preliminary wait served a purpose that is neither necessary nor desirable in the States, but that is admirably fitted to such gatherings as this, for it is designed and executed to make the crowd savage and blood-thirsty and thus indirectly add to their enjoyment of the spectacle. The cries of "*El toro*" had almost drowned the band and Benner was completely disgusted when a betasselled bandsman arose under the admiring gaze of the shouting rabble and blew a rusty note on a trumpet as long as a coach-horn. An answering trumpet blared, the entrance doors flew wide, and into the sand-covered arena, bowing carelessly to the unrestrained and garlic-scented applause of the standing populace, stepped the redoubtable and unscathed Chico. Behind him trooped the *bandalleros*, in blue and white and gold, and last of all, on the pitiful horses of the *combate del toro*, rode the gaudy *picadors*.

Around and around the ring they trooped, and round after round of applause rivalled those that had gone before until the *espada* and his *picadors* trooped out and at intervals in the ring, nodding graciously to proud acquaintances in the stadium, stood the white-stockinged *bandelleros*.

The trumpet sounded again, again the gates flew wide, the crowd screamed with delight and anticipation, and dazed, perplexed, and thoroughly frightened, the first of the vaunted four-bulls-four carromed into the ring. He followed the high fence around, looking wildly for an opening, as he would have done in his native corral. He sniffed suspiciously at the wooden shields and made his way back to the gate, where he stood looking through the bars expectantly, with switching tail and wide eyes, waiting for them to open.

"Coward!" shrieked the crowd, and hisses and groans made up the general uproar. "Poltroon!" they yelled, and fantastic ingenuity devised anathemas of all degrees for the shaming of a brute.

A cautious *bandallero* crept up beside him, quietly unfurling his purple cloak. Suddenly, with swift legs, he rushed on and past the bull, flaunted the cloth in his face and blinded him. The great head flew up and caught the folds upon polished horns, and for the first time the bull evidenced spirit. He pawed the annoyance into the loose sand, and when his eyes were clear of their obstruction he stood facing a more ambitious youth who held his gaudy *bandalleros* above his head, stamped his foot in *jota* style, and made alluring motions with his arms. Him the beast charged madly, but the promise of placed darts was not fulfilled, and with wide margin of safety, the youth fled to a shield that splintered before the impact of fine black horns.

Before the bull could turn another of his tormentors dashed past, and as he ran thrust with both hands two festooned darts deep into the already heaving shoulders of the excited beast. A grunt of astonishment and pain gave evidence of success, and the crowd cheered nastily. The bull was active now—fresh and angry, and the toreadors played the sportless game with skill, for at great distances they flaunted him, tempted him to rush madly on hopeless chases, always taking refuge behind the many shields, and never for one instant risking danger. As the beast grew tired under these constant efforts and seemed to become aware of their futility, the *bandalleros* grew bolder. They even faced him as he stood with lowered head and bloodshot eyes, swaying from side to side in rhythmic anger; they allowed him to charge them heavily while they swept swiftly aside, leaving needlessly cruel darts deep in his ensanguined shoulders.

Here is the one period of besmirched magnificence in the entire brutal atavism, and here only is adduced from Saxon spirit any other sensation than that of helpless—stiflingly helpless—loathing anger. The great gory head, the unflinching red-rimmed eye, the heaving shoulders of power, and the sight of the dauntless, lumbering brute himself, fighting heavily, but without one single flaw of cowardice, absolutely against hope—all this is admirable, but beyond this single period the studied degradation of it is beyond belief, and this

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It was mumbled into a slender, pointed ear.—Page 174.

view is singularly incongruous to the true spirit of the *combate del toro*. For from this, through the disgusting minutes when the bull is forced to the ghastly mutilation of helpless horses, to the final instant of supreme cowardice, when the blood-mad crowd loses all control and screams with abandoned cruelty, "*Al muerte! Al muerte!*" while the dauntless *espada* thrusts his fine, sharp blade into the quivering lungs of the thoroughly exhausted and quite helpless invincible, the alien to the blood revel, if numbed by horror in his seat, can only clench his helpless hands and hope that a blazing earth might open and engulf the revellers.

The weazened little bandsman kept his cruel, expert eyes on the strained faces about him, and he knew the exact moment to put an end to this, which is really but a preparatory stage for the spectacle to follow. He

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trumpeted once more, and once more the gates were thrown wide. The commotion in the entrance lasted but a second, then, spurred furiously by the iron-encased legs of their thoroughly protected riders, the pitiful victims of brutality hobbled into the arena and were guided to posts on opposite sides of the ring.

Benner had not seen such horses or dreamed that such existed. Necks so thin and devoid of muscle that the vertebræ showed plainly in relief, hip and stifle bones so close to the surface of the crackling skin that the protuberances were capped by fearful abrasions; simply skeletons, they seemed —skeletons with a shrivelled covering of parchment. They staggered and swayed beneath the weight of their armored riders, and the painful hobble that the long, sharp spurs adduced was a final effort. The bull gazed from one to the other in apparent amazement and made no move toward them, but the *bandalleros* were clever. By well-judged runs from the lumbering charges of the exhausted brute they left him nonplussed within reach of the shining spear of one of the *picadors*, and the spear licked out and stung the quivering and abraded shoulder. What happened on the instant Benner did not see; he was strangely fascinated by the mount of the other *picador*. This horse had shown a modicum of spirit; with a grotesque movement of his head, rebelling at the eye-bandage and speaking of former mettle, he had displaced the annoyance and was actually fretting with the bit. This alone was remarkable, but the gait, the carriage, the flattening of the ears, all fascinated him, and his accustomed eye read a similarity in conformation to some horse he had seen, or ridden, or lost money on, and it was with difficulty that he looked away even when the strangely human, shivering cry from the other side of the ring startled him into horror. He looked across, and with every countryman in the stadium gripped the boards beneath him to save himself from wild indiscretion and his teeth bit blood from his trembling lip. Strangely still under the breathless silence of the place, though speaking of fearful potentiality in every vibrant line, the great straining bull and the anguished horse formed a quivering group like a horror in sculptured stone. The massive head of the bull seemed fixed beneath the body of the dying brute and the heaving effort of the great neck muscles was apparent. What held the crowd in strained anticipation ended in incongruous bathos, but the momentary picture, the dying brutes, with the scared white face of the thoroughly frightened *picador* above, will remain with Benner long. Suddenly the strained muscles relaxed, the great head came away almost gently, sullen drops of sluggish blood coursed down the sleek black horns into the bull's eyes, and as the crowd broke forth in cheers, attendants rushed forth to stanch the ghastly wound and prop the suffering beast up to receive one more attack. Their efforts were in vain. Very quietly the stiff knees crumpled, the withered muzzle lurched forward to the sand, and with scarcely a sound, the suffering horse fell dead. A red-haired farmer-boy who sat next Benner and who was one of a San Antonio excursion, reached out and gripped his knee all unconsciously. His face was half turned toward Benner, and it was innocent as a cherub's, but black curses came from the fresh lips in a dreary monotone, like the voice of a man under an anæsthetic, and Benner winced under the spasmodic grip and realized why he held *himself* in his seat. The crowd was crying for the other horse, and the bull needed no urging. The bandage had been quite displaced and, to the screaming delight of the audience, the horse leaped stiffly aside and escaped the first awkward charge. But it was not a fight; there was no single chance for the starved brute, and the *picador* fought his pitiful effort with bit and spur. He succeeded in turning the stubborn head away, and as the bull came on he deliberately forced a flank to the attack and raised his own leg from the way of harm. It was a glancing blow and scarcely ripped the hide, but just here the rash impulse in every horrified breast was incarnated, and even life in the ring was stilled by a wild scream that rose in the shrill treble of rage from the topmost tier of seats, shrilled out a frenzied jargon, and died away in inadequacy.

"Las!" it screamed. "O Las—my God —Lascar!"

A raging madman in ill-fitting civilian clothes was coming like an avalanche down the steps of people, striking, fighting, and kicking. He forced an open way before him and was in the ring before the swarthy police could raise a hand. He rushed to the bleeding shoulder and his hand shot up and

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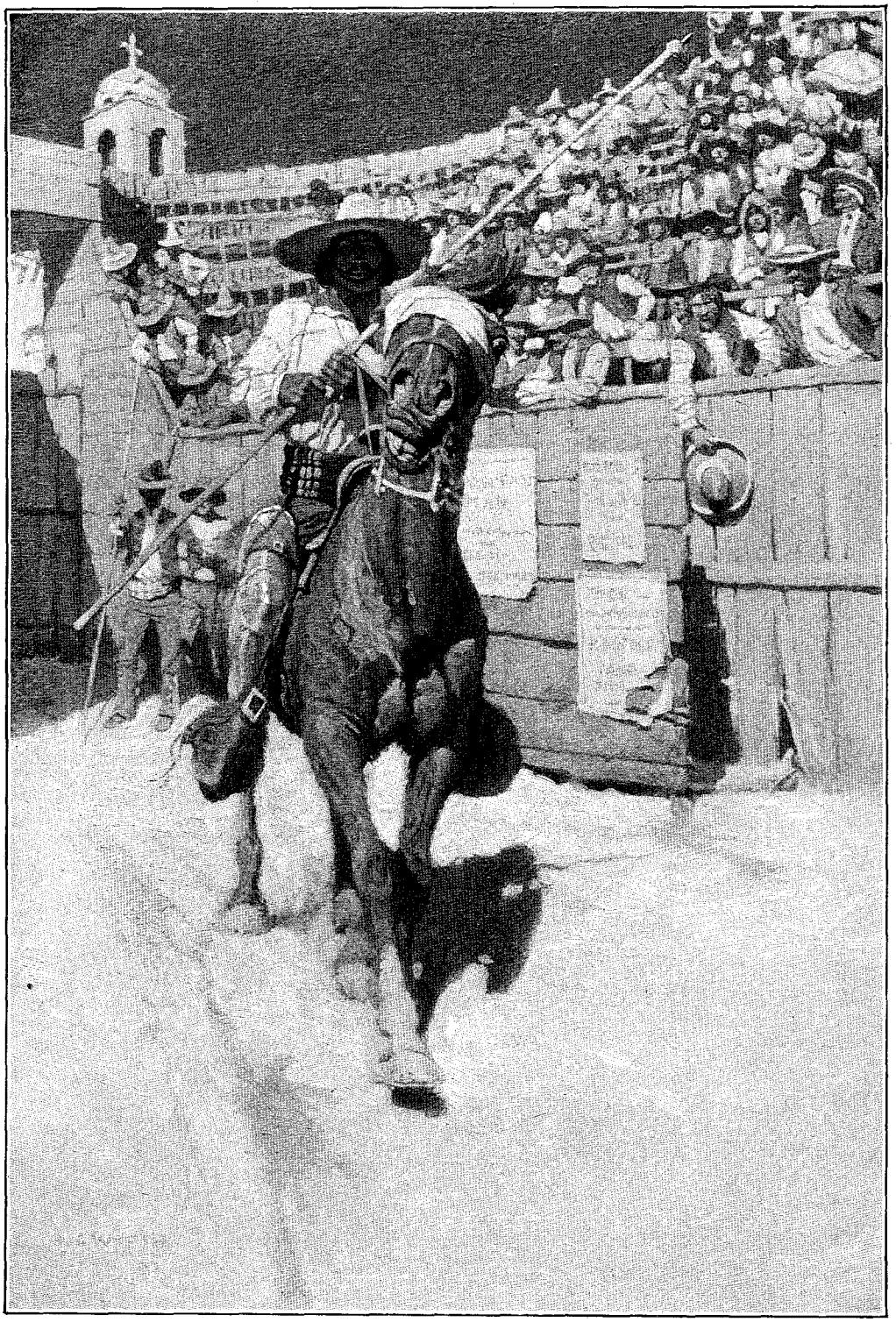

Drawn by N. C. Wyeth.

He was actually fretting with the bit.—Page 180.

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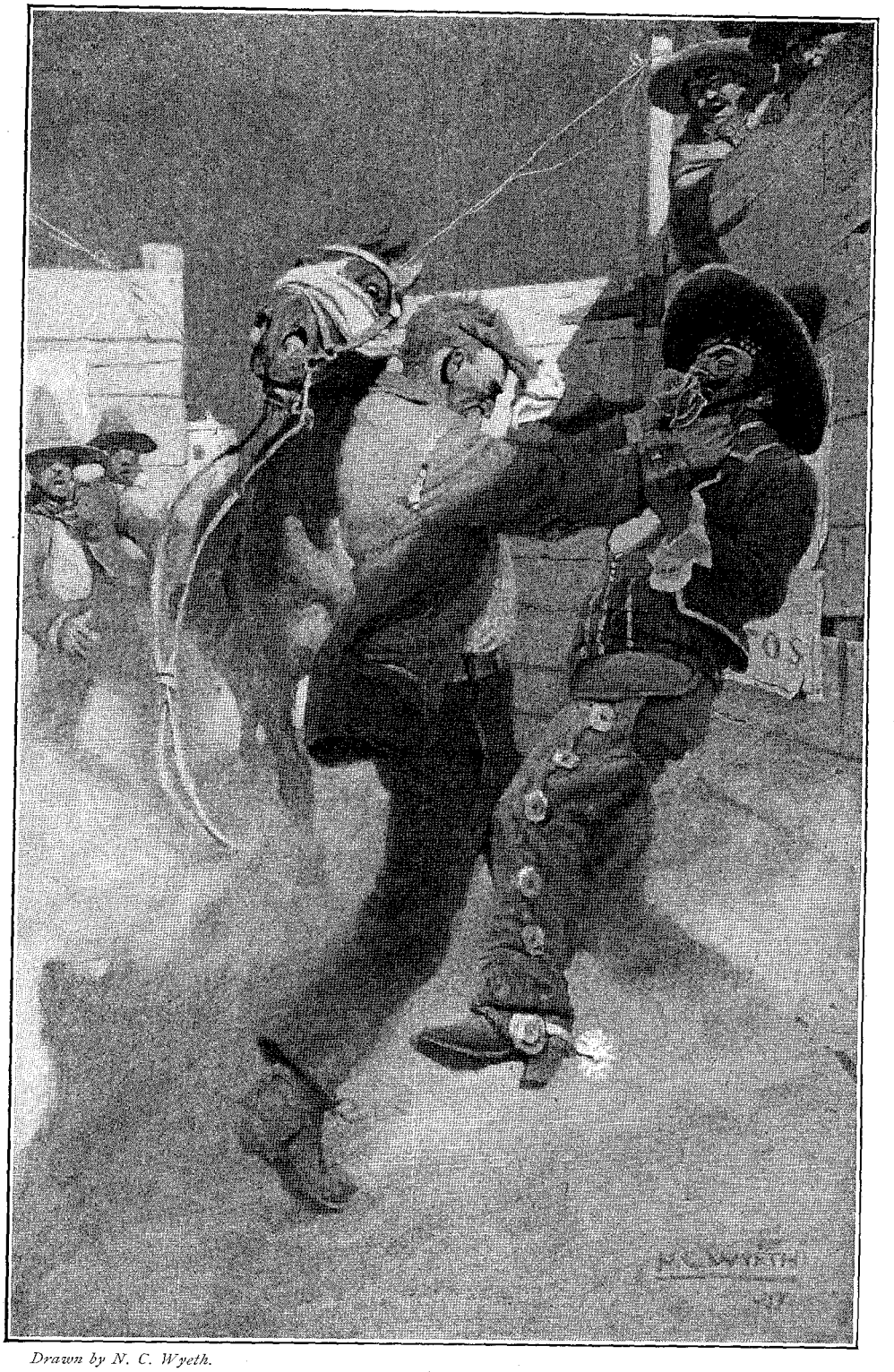

Drawn by N. C. Wyeth.

He thrust a dirty, crumpled wad of bills into the gasping mouth.—Page 183.

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picked the startled rider from his seat; as though he had been an unclean insect, he was fairly hurled to the ground. The arms of the man were about the horse's neck and he was murmuring unspeakable curses, jumbled with the tenderest endearments of an imaginative lover. He kicked the gates apart, and at sight of the wildly gesticulating master of ceremonies his uncontrolled madness flared up again. He seized the man beneath his drooping jaws with fingers that fairly bit the flesh and he thrust a dirty, crumpled wad of bills into the gasping mouth with his bare fist.

"You'll take fifty dollars for this horse," he jibbered in unintelligible English and he hurtled the writhing body against the plank wall with crushing force.

In the street, of course, they seized him, fighting tigerishly. Had it been in the ring they would have torn him to shreds, but some hundreds of Texan excursionists had trooped out of the stadium, and they stood about the police in a silently ugly group. They are tall, gaunt men, these West-Texans, and their faces are hard and not at all good to look at. Danvers went to jail with little grace.

Antoine makes *alcaldes* and various city *jefes* and unmakes them, and in the early morning hours the hinges of the *carcel* doors creaked and out on the long bridge the customs officers stopped a strange procession of a very erect gray man in very neat civilian clothes, a very erect gray man not in very neat civilian clothes, and a limping travesty of a raw-boned horse, whose future stretches out in a vista of happy, happy days.

MORTIMER'S FAILURE

By Jesse Lynch Williams

ILLUSTRATION BY F. C. YOHN

THE extraordinary plot against Mortimer Billings's wife was planned and executed by Billings himself; but Sharpe was responsible for it, Sharpe, the famous neurologist, upon whom the husband, in desperation, had called late one afternoon, following a hard day, by no means unsuccessful, in Wall Street.

ACT I

"THE whole secret of your wife's trouble," said the physician glibly, a dapper little man, with an engaging smile and mild blue eyes—but they saw everything—"lies in the simple fact that she has everything and does nothing." He paused to see what the husband thought of that.

"Humph," said Billings. He did not think much of it.

"And such a departure from the natural state," the famous physician continued imperturbably, "namely, that of having nothing and doing everything, is entirely too wide for any product of nature to stand, even the most civilized. It is abnormal. It is wrong. Hence it brings its victims to an abnormal condition of mind and body, illustrating one of the phases of what I call, borrowing the nomenclature of another science, 'the point of diminishing returns' of civilization."

"But what I left my office early to-day to find out," interrupted the husband, "is what is the matter with my wife." Billings was a busy man, a practical man, a man of large affairs; he did not seem to hang upon the utterances of physicians, even famous specialists, with the awed respect manifested by the latter's female callers.

"And I am telling you," returned Sharpe blandly, for he in turn was not particularly impressed by the presence of a famous capitalist; he dealt largely in men of affairs, quite as many of his patients being men who did too much as women who did too little. "There is, I assure you, Mr. Billings, nothing in the world seriously the matter with your wife—*except* the most serious thing imaginable in a world made by and

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Drawn by F. C. Yohn.

Mrs. Billings's husband had not enjoyed hauling dirt.—Page 191.

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for work. Effort, struggle, absorption in something outside of oneself; it is the law of this whirling universe." He paused impressively. "Mr. Billings, your wife is breaking that law every moment of her idle existence." Then he smiled and added, with a good-fellow manner, which the other liked better: "Of course, I can turn on a shower of technical terms, if you prefer, about hypochondriacs, neurasthenia, and all that. But *you*, I thought, would like the simple truth."

"Cut out the technical terms," said Billings, also smiling a little. "Only the truth is, my wife hasn't a lazy bone in her body. There are plenty of things she wants to do—if she were only well enough."

"On the contrary," corrected the famous specialist, shaking his head authoritatively, "she would be well enough if she only had to do them—whether she wanted to or not."

With this he paused, and genially returned Billings's scrutiny, each taking the other's measure of personality, so to speak, each respecting the other a little more, perhaps.

The physician proceeded: "Now if your wife only had a half dozen children to worry about——"

"As there are no children," interrupted Billings, "suppose we leave them out of the question." He turned his gaze out of the window. It was a sore point; Billings was a fat, domestic man.

The mild blue eyes took in all this. Also the neurologist perceived that he had to do with a devoted husband; this always complicated a case unfortunately. "Your wife," resumed the physician more sympathetically, "has an active mind."

"She has a splendid mind," emphasized the husband.

"Precisely; but of the type which, when not drawn out upon something else, turns in upon itself, like millstones which have no grist to grind."

"And what I want to know," insisted the man of action, "is what I'm going to do about it. I've tried travel, baths, X-rays, massage, vibration, osteopathy—I've even tried Christian Science and mental healing. I have done everything for her!"

"Ah, Mr. Billings, that is just it," returned the physician; "you've done everything for her—what has she done for you?"

"For me?" repeated the husband, as if puzzled. "Didn't she marry me?"

It came out so naïvely, and the implication was so clearly, "Isn't that enough?" that the physician answered it. "No," he said, with his engaging smile; "permit me to express the opinion that it is *not* enough; and there is no place on earth where it *is* considered enough, except here in this big, boyish, overgrown, newly rich nation you and I are so proud of. Look at the large responsibilities of a French family; look at the exacting duties of an English lady—social exactions they may be, enjoyable they sometimes are, but she has to get up out of bed and meet them." The physician emphasized this with a slap on his desk.

"My wife," returned Billings, "has too much intelligence, too fine a spirit to be satisfied with a social career. She long since tired of the game."

"Precisely; and was not compelled by circumstances, hers or yours, to keep it up whether satisfied or not. In this country unfortunately, a woman's career has little or nothing to do with her husband's. Social life is merely a game to throw over at will if it doesn't amuse. Well," he added inquiringly, "she next took up fads, I presume."

"O Lord! all sorts of fads," smiled Billings. The two men were now getting along very well together.

"And abandoned each in turn when the novelty wore off?"

Billings hesitated. "She could not help laughing at the strenuosity of her fellow-faddists," was his way of putting it.

"I see," said the expert, "and there was no way of compelling her to follow up her fads, whether absurd or not?"

"Doctor," said Billings whimsically, "I could hardly compel her to lilt Irish poetry unless she felt like it."

"Quite so," said the physician, smiling; and then after a pause: "Mr. Billings, your wife, before her marriage—had she not been thrown on her own resources at one time?"

Billings explained that when she was about twenty years old her father had failed and died; she, like the plucky girl she was, had sprung into the breach with much of father's former spirit, and had supported, not only herself, but her broken-hearted mother. "I had known her father, and this was what first called my attention to her," said Billings, sighing at the recollec-

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tion of the animated loveliness, the energetic grace, the efficient poise of the radiant girl he had wooed. "For a while she wanted to keep on with her work. That was my most serious rival." Billings laughed consciously. "But of course I wouldn't hear of it," he added.

"Why not?" Sharpe asked it in the most matter-of-fact manner.

Billings looked up to see whether he was really in earnest; he seemed to be. "Why, doctor," was the reply, "she's my wife."

The physician opened his mouth to answer, but closed it again and merely looked professionally inscrutable, a look which even the youngest members of his profession acquire early in their careers. He knew how powerless was science when pitted against sentiment. Was it worth while trying any longer to convince this generous, hard-working American husband that his conception of a spouse's duty toward his wife was as thoughtlessly cruel in practice as it was thoughtfully kind in intention? And yet this good man considered himself "practical," prided himself upon bringing his mate all the benefits of an enlightened civilization! In effect, the relations of this pair were neither practical nor civilized—so it seemed to this man of science, who kept an eye on other sciences than his own. The instinct of protection remained from a rougher age; but reciprocal responsibilities on the part of the woman had been smoothed away now that the age and their circumstances were no longer rough. Consequently, in the case of this wife, since nothing in the way of any other duty had been substituted, the resulting relation was more like that of a man and his mistress than a marriage of equals in a highly organized state of society, facing the world together as life partners, dividing the burdens and problems as well as sharing the luxuries of existence. The chief difference (from every point of view except religion and sociology) was that the so-called moral relation was a good deal worse—this woman was not impelled to exert herself to retain her luxuries; they were her legal rights, not merely his devoted favors. So it was no wonder that life together was becoming rather a wreck. Also it was no wonder that the scientist had closed his mouth abruptly, and now took another tack.

"Mr. Billings, during these last three years," he inquired, for he found the Socratic method the best for handling practical men accustomed to doing their own thinking, "since your wife became an invalid has she never come out from her mist of self-absorption, her nervous inertia?"

"Frequently," Billings assured him; "but less frequently each year."

"Symptomatic," nodded the physician; "but I mean, more than for those brief periods. Has she ever given signs of coming all the way out? Of being her old, efficient self, able to make decisions without worrying, vigorous, buoyant, happily active."

"Yes, once." Billings hesitated. "When her mother died. Sounds strange, I suppose."

"To you, perhaps—not to me."

"But—I have never seen a more devoted daughter. She had supported her mother, you know; and that had brought them very close together. I thought it would kill her."

"And instead it made her live, for the time being?"

"Well, I thought she was merely showing her nerve and would collapse after the funeral; but no, that girl still insisted upon overseeing everything herself. She wouldn't even let me attend to the notes of acknowledgment; I can see her now, writing away with the tears rolling down her cheeks, leaning back so they wouldn't drop on the paper—she writes very individual notes. She even took a hand in designing the lettering on the vault—she has an artistic bent, you know—and through the whole thing she somehow seemed not only well and strong, but, in a certain sense, though broken-hearted, she seemed——"

"Happy?"

"Well, I wouldn't like to say happy exactly."

"No; of course you wouldn't; we are all such conventional cowards. We often think ourselves unnatural when we are only natural."

"Humph," said Billings sardonically; "if her mother's taking away could do all that, I suppose you will tell me next that her husband's death would affect a permanent cure."

"By no means, Mr. Billings. A serious illness on your part might go a long way toward it, but I fear a widow of yours would be left entirely too solvent to recover. On the contrary, she would relapse after a little

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into a more permanent patient than ever; unless," added the expert, "her second husband married her for her money and developed into a scamp, an invalid, or—a father."

Billings remarked parenthetically that he had not expressed any immediate intention of dying for his wife. "Ah," pursued the physician, with the gleam of an idea in his eyes, "but you *would* be willing to make a few sacrifices—to give up a few luxuries?"

"What are 'luxuries' to me? Country places I can't use—too far from your office, sir; a yacht I dare not sail—she worries about me; horses I can't ride; cars I can't drive; and a home—well, doctor, if you cure my wife you can have my house for a hospital; it's practically one already."

"But I can't cure your wife," returned Sharpe suddenly.

"Then you give it up, after all?"

"But you can."

"I! how can I?"

"You won't do it, though. I've tried other husbands."

"You might try me," said Billings.

The doctor leaned forward. "Jump over to the wrong side of the market—smash your business—fail!"

The two men confronted each other a moment in silence. Presently Billings, convinced by the other's eye that he actually meant the thing he said, smiled indulgently. "Doctor," he remarked, "you don't realize what you are proposing."

"Mr. Billings," was the reply, "I realize that there is one thing even the most devoted husbands are more devoted to than their wives—their work."

"It's my life," said Billings.

"It's your wife's death," said the physician; "her living death."

The financier opened his mouth to speak, but closed it again somewhat after the manner of the man of science a few moments before—and, curiously enough, for a not dissimilar reason. He felt the futility of explaining to this well-meaning but narrow-minded specialist the consequences of the stupendous act of folly and wickedness he proposed. No matter what Billings might say, the physician would believe that the mere loss of money, of power, of prestige, caused the hesitancy. What could this impractical little man who dealt in death and disease know of the consequence to others of the failure of Mortimer Billings.—the large interests involved, the half-finished undertakings, the great dreams and plans for opening up new sections of the country, the development of vast industries, and the wreck and ruin that would be caused by such a chimerical decision, such quixotic action? The physician considered himself a humanitarian, and doubtless there was much to his credit on that score, thought Billings; but he did all his work on individual organisms, and so did not consider the point of view of humanity at large. Every specialized vision of life, whether commercial, scientific, or artistic, has its Blind-spot.

"Doctor," said Billings, with a gesture of impatience, "what you propose is absurd. It's out of the question."

"Mr. Billings," said the other, quickly assuming the jocular note; "that is my only prescription. But it will cure."

"Doctor," said the caller, suavely responding to the jocular; "that may be true; but I'll be damned if I do it," and he arose to go.

"And, Mr. Billings," replied the physician accompanying him to the door, "you'll be damned if you don't. So there we are—where we started out! I perceive that I shall continue to have the pleasure of treating Mrs. Billings. I bid you good afternoon, sir," and they parted with unexpressed sentiments of mutual contempt, as the next caller was shown in.

ACT II

Mrs. Billings and her appendages occupied the floor above the beautiful but now useless Empire drawing-room. The carefully selected chintzes of her boudoir, like the wall coverings of the rest of her suite, had been removed, because she could not stand the irrevocable recurrence of designs. Dull-colored cartridge paper had been substituted for a while; but the regularity of the joints where the rolls slightly overlapped soon attracted attention to themselves and got on her nerves, so in turn the paper was scraped off and the bare walls were tinted a neutral gray, which served the purpose rather well, except for a speck or two, which she tried to endure with fortitude. All the pictures and "pretty things" which she had once cherished had made way for glass-topped tables and white enam-

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eled affairs, like a hospital. Nearly all the furnishings were washable, and gave forth a faint odor of carbolic acid. The thought of germs was one of the things which got on the poor lady's nerves.

Noises, naturally, were another. There were double doors, somewhat like those of a telephone booth, and double-sashed windows, hermetically sealed to keep out the noise and germs of the street. Billings had installed, at great expense, the most modern fresh-air system of flues, the air being drawn down from the roof to the basement, screened through silk, warmed over one set of coils or cooled over another, according to the automatic thermostat, which worked without any audible click. When Billings, who was usually allowed to visit his wife once a day, sometimes twice, wanted to light his cigar he had to go downstairs to strike a match. This was not much of a hardship, because, as his wife pointed out, he could always light his first one before starting upon the expedition to her rooms, and his second from the first, the stump of number one being escorted from the apartment by a maid summoned by the nurse. The difficult problem was to get into the room without startling Mrs. Billings, who couldn't stand being startled. Entering the room silently without being announced was very bad; knocking on the door was, of course, worse. So Billings had installed a silent indicator upon which the nurse was accustomed to gaze at certain agreed-upon hours. Then she would say, in a very soft, unstartling voice, "Mr. Billings is now entering the elevator on the ground-floor, and will be standing outside of the door in a moment. Shall I let him in?"

This afternoon—it was a few minutes after his talk with the physician—Mrs. Billings let him in at once. Sometimes he was allowed to wait a while and look at the blank walls of the hall. This time he had kept the nurse waiting staring at the annunciator for nearly an hour, while his wife became nervous.

"Mor-timer! how could you?" she began chidingly in the thin, spiritless drawl of the expert invalid, her eyelids drooping. "Why didn't you tell me you were going to be late? I was so upset I couldn't take my nap." One could see that she was very sorry for herself, and anyone but the man who loved her would have been exasperated with her. She had a wan beauty in the delicate regularity of feature, and he was sorry for her, too. That had been one of the great troubles—he was too sympathetic and indulgent.

Mortimer had closed the door softly, and now crossed the room with the quiet step he had learned by experience to adopt. "I was unavoidably detained, Clara, dear."

"Not at the office?"

"Yes, at the office." He did not say whose office.

His wife looked more offended. "Miss Hudson telephoned twice; they said you had gone! I think it's outrageous! You must have that telephone girl discharged to-morrow."

"Very well, dear; very well," said Mortimer abstractedly, for he had something on his mind.

"I kept seeing them bear your dead body home on a stretcher. It was terrible. It has put me back three days." She was fond of her husband and leaned upon him.

"Oh, no, Mrs. Billings," put in Miss Hudson, the nurse, cheerily—perhaps because leaving the room for her hour's relaxation out of doors.

"You don't know anything about it, Miss Hudson," said the invalid, and added to her husband as the door, very softly, closed. "That woman is like a stone; she's not in the least sympathetic or interested in me."

"I'll speak to her," said Mortimer abstractedly.

"Oh, no, no, no; you would be sure to hurt her feelings. Promise me you won't."

"All right, then, I won't speak to her."

"Mortimer, you're keeping something from me," his wife resumed irritably; "you know how it puts me back to be teased."

"Clara, dear," he replied in a grave manner, "prepare yourself."

"Now, Mortimer! don't tell me any bad news—I can't stand anything more to-day," she declared positively.

"I'm afraid you'll have to, Clara."

"You're not going to take me South again? I won't go." She seemed almost in a panic about it.

"It's worse than that, Clara."

"Mortimer!" She was now feeling her pulse. "Your sister is coming to visit us again!"

"No, my dear," he replied with a slight

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smile; "there's no danger of her wanting to come here again."

"Then what is it, Mortimer! Don't you see how you're upsetting me? Can't you think of me a little?"

"Clara, have you read the evening papers?"

"You know I never read the horrid papers."

He did know it; he was relying upon it. "I'm afraid you must this time." He brought forth the *Evening Post*.

"Don't," she shuddered; "don't let it rustle!"

"Look at this: P. and H. has dropped eight points. Do you know what that means to me?" As a matter of fact and financial history it meant that Billings and his associates had at last secured the long-desired outlet for their ore, but Mortimer was an experienced bluffer.

The expression on his face startled her out of her supine self-absorption. She suddenly sat up, rigidly erect. "Quick, what is it?" she cried.

"It means," he declared in low, measured tones, simulating despair, "that I am on the wrong side of the market—that my business is smashed! That I have failed, am ruined!"

He turned his face away as if to hide his grief, though really it was to avoid the look of horror in her wide-open eyes. He retreated across the room, flung himself upon a lounge, and buried his face in his hands, muttering in broken accents: "My dreams, my half-finished undertakings—gone, all gone! My life is wrecked!"

Bedridden patients who have not touched foot to the floor in months have been known in case of fire to rush to the rescue of their children; it was with this same primal instinct, the maternal instinct of protection, that Mortimer Billings's wife flew across the room to her prostrate spouse, gathered his poor, bowed head to her bosom, and thinking now only of him, cried in vibrant tones: "My poor, dear boy! My poor, dear boy!"

ACT III

THE first question to decide, now that they were penniless, was where they were to live; and Billings told his wife that she would have to decide it. Following the first galvanic rally a reaction threatened; Mrs. Billings seemed inclined to slump into hopeless apathy. "I'll go wherever you say, Mortimer," she answered with a wan smile. "I don't care where we live." One cannot be cured overnight, even of imaginary ills and their effects.

"But you've got to care; you've got to say," declared Mortimer firmly. "Haven't I enough on my mind meeting my creditors?"

He seemed almost unkind, and this was so astonishingly unusual that she was on the verge of one of her old hysterical turns, until catching sight of his face working convulsively, and thinking of all he had been through, she straightway stopped thinking about herself. "Poor old Mortimer," she said, patting his arm; "of course, you have enough to do already. I'll attend to my share."

It nearly broke his heart at first to watch her, tired out and distressed, nerving herself to meet the situation with such sweet, pathetic attempts to look cheerful for his sake. He found it more difficult than he had anticipated to break the habit of years; to refrain from sympathizing with her woes, bearing her burdens as well as his own. Sometimes he feared he was overdoing it—she came near going to pieces. He knew how keenly she felt the lack of his solicitude. But he was afraid to be sympathetic; it would make her feel sorry for herself. So he compromised by being very demonstrative and affectionate. He showed her how much he appreciated her pluck and efficiency. Appreciation never hurt anyone. And the result was the difference between making her feel sorry for herself and making her feel pleased with herself. Moreover, it brought them closer together. Already they were lovers again.

The next day she reported that she had the refusal on a charming little flat for light housekeeping down in the quiet part of town known as Chelsea. "It will be so near our work," she said.

"'Our' work?" asked Mortimer.

She ran and kissed him gayly. "I have decided to be your stenographer, dearie!"

"What!" exclaimed Mortimer in sudden alarm; "the deuce you have!" He might fool his wife; he couldn't his stenographer.

"Don't you *want* me in the office with you? You don't look a bit pleased," she said, with something of the coquetry of former years.

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"It would be charming," said Mortimer gallantly; "but I cannot think of letting you do it, my dear, brave girl. Remember, now, Clara."

"Such light housekeeping!" she returned. "I can do both; I used to." He should have remembered that. "Mortimer," she insisted sweetly, "I simply *must* do something."

"Do fancy work," said Mortimer, "at home."

"But, you see, I never learned fancy work. Besides, it wouldn't pay; but I did learn stenography, and it pays quite well. I was very good at it before I became a librarian."

"My dear," said Mortimer solemnly—this was to be a staggerer—"perhaps we cannot afford even one maid!"

It *was* rather staggering, but she arose smiling. "If we are so poor as all that," she returned cheerfully, "it's all the more reason why I should help you in your work, dear. I'll give up the refusal on the flat and we'll live in a boarding-house."

Billings groaned inwardly. "Clara," he said, becoming desperate, "I wanted to spare you this; but you force me to tell it. Now that I have settled with my creditors, I find I shall not be in a position to employ a stenographer, for I myself am only to be a clerk, a poor clerk, Clara, in the very firm which still bears my name."

"Poor old Mortimer," she returned sympathetically; "then I'm sure they'll give your wife a clerkship, too. I'll appeal to them myself."

Mortimer mopped his genuinely beaded brow. "Wait until to-morrow," he begged, playing for time. "And don't forget, we're to say nothing about the failure to anyone." He had explained to her, rather vaguely perhaps, that it was "one of those quiet failures" which the newspapers know nothing about. His partners were his chief creditors, and he had "quietly" assigned everything to them. "And the change in our scale of living—I'm telling everyone that it is merely another of your fads, my dear—the simple life."

But Mortimer was beginning to think it would not be very simple for him. A dual life never is.

That afternoon he was very late in getting home. "Well," he said, feeling better, "I have come to terms with my employers," and then broke the sad news that it was out of the question, with the salary they heartlessly offered, to live in the city even most simply. "So," he went on cheerfully, "I have secured a small house in a Connecticut village at the extreme edge of the commuters' zone. That will keep you out there—in the sunshine and the flowers."

"Poor old Mortimer!" she replied, beaming upon him; "I see how hard it is for you to tell me these things. It's so brave of you to pretend to like it! But you mustn't be discouraged. Whatever happens, we have each other. Together we can meet poverty bravely." She looked very sweet and courageous as she said it. Each added blow only seemed to make her stronger, like beating molten metal.

She did not like to worry him about it, but how was she to look after the housekeeping and go back and forth to the city every day? For she was now more than ever determined to get some kind of employment—in a shop, if necessary. And think of the late hours! "You ought to have consulted me first, Mortimer," she said, a little hurt.

"But this was such an exceptional bargain, and it wouldn't wait," he improvised easily, and showed her the real-estate broker's photographs of a charming little vine-clad cottage with plenty of ground around it.

"What is the rent?" she inquired with alarm.

"The rent? How do you mean—by the month or the year?"

"By whatever arrangement you made," she demanded, irritatingly practical.

Now, unfortunately, Billings had been in too much of a hurry to ask his secretary about this detail; so he said at a guess: "Thirty-five dollars a month; aren't we lucky?"

She shook her head grimly. "We can't afford it, my dear,"

"Oh, yes, we can, because you are going to help pay for it. There's a Carnegie library out there, and they're looking for an assistant librarian. A friend of mine has secured the job for *you!*" That is, Mortimer's secretary had arranged to send the present incumbent abroad with full salary and expenses paid. "What do you think of that?"

There was an interlude of rejoicing. "Am I really going to help you?" she ex-

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claimed girlishly. "Oh, I haven't been so happy since I don't know when!"

"Since your mother died," thought Mortimer; but he didn't say so.

"What is the salary?" she inquired suddenly.

Confound this practicality. He might be able to keep her in the dark as to the real rent, whatever it proved to be, but as to her own salary—Mortimer had to confess that he had forgotten to ask about the salary. At which his wife gave him an anxious look. He had been through a great deal lately—perhaps he was breaking down; she thought of taking him around to see Dr. Sharpe. "You see this friend of mine," Mortimer was explaining glibly, "was in such a hurry I didn't like to bother him; he's a very important man" (and, indeed, Billings's secretary was a very important man); "beggars can't be choosers, you know. But the salary will be all right, and, as the doctor says, the quiet, regular work will be better for your——" Then he stopped abruptly, for the doctor had expressly forbidden him to remind her of her nerves.

But Billings needn't have worried about *that*. "Mortimer," she cried, approaching him solicitously, "what were you doing at the doctor's?" She gave him a searching look—which, by the way, would have delighted Sharpe, though it did not delight Mortimer at all, for he had to make answer to his wife, and yet obey Sharpe's injunctions. Little beads of sweat again burst out upon his brow—sometimes a sign of nervous exhaustion.

"I knew it! I knew it!" she exclaimed; "you *have* broken down."

"Nonsense," said Mortimer; "I merely dropped in to pay the bill."

"Ah! How much was it, dear?"

"See here, Clara," replied Mortimer, who did not know, "if you don't stop asking these vulgar questions——"

"That means that the bill is enormous!"

"On the contrary," answered her husband, smiling for a reason she did not understand, "I am becoming more and more convinced that Sharpe has undercharged me."

ACT IV

Mrs. Mortimer Billings, President of the Village Improvement Society, Secretary of the Present Era Club, member of the Public School Board, *et cetera*, and Mrs. Billings's husband, a Wall Street clerk, were walking in the cool of the evening up and down the terrace of the diminutive but dainty formal garden which Mrs. Billings had designed, after library hours, and for which Mrs. Billings's husband had hauled dirt after coming home with the other commuters.

Mrs. Billings's husband had not enjoyed hauling dirt. He tried to get out of it by turning over to his wife the result of a lucky tip on the market kindly given him, she supposed, by one of his employers. But Mrs. Billings insisted that the exercise would do him good, now that he was a clerk on an office stool all day, and quietly kept the money to invest in something "safe"—without consulting her husband. He, poor dear, had ruined himself in speculative stocks, and therefore his opinion in such matters did not amount to much. Not that she loved him the less for it—not at all; he could not help it, poor fellow; it was his "temperament," she explained indulgently, and was the more kind and considerate toward him for his unfortunate weakness. Often she noted a far-away, worried look as he went about his "chores," shaking down the furnace or pumping the water for the tank; and this look meant that he had been losing his earnings in speculation again, and she smiled fondly to think how easy it was for her to see through him; for, like a naughty boy, he only told about his transactions when he happened to make a lucky turn and indulged in some untoward extravagance—such as an electric pump for filling that same bottomless tank, or buying her a new fur-lined coat last winter to walk to the library in. This last she could not forgive, though she loved him for it.

The past year of hardship and economy had drawn them closer together than ever. They were very loving, and life was undoubtedly sweet and all that; but just the same, it was an awful bore to Mortimer. He was sick of the simple life. There was nothing in it when you weren't obliged to lead it. He was tired of getting up at dawn and getting indigestion rushing for the 7.55. He was becoming nervous and unstrung from the strain of keeping up the elaborate deception. He had cured his wife, but sometimes believed he was going to take her place as a nervous wreck.

Yet he did not dare to tell her, for even if

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she might forgive him, she would probably relapse. Sharpe said so; and then all this foolish year would have been endured in vain. He didn't know what to do, but he knew he would soon do something. His wife was having the time of her life, but he was getting desperate. It was no longer funny; no joke can last a year, especially such a practical one, which turns upon one's self like a boomerang. It no longer amused him to be known—in the village—as his own namesake and nephew and employee. "Humph! Nothing but a poor relation of Billings, the banker—no reason for being so stiff and formal," was the verdict at the bridge club.

"Yes; Fred says Mrs. Billings's husband wears his mustache that queer way just because his uncle does," contributed the local doctor's wife; "likes to be taken for his uncle." This was rather rubbing it in.

"Well, he *does* look like the Mortimer Billings—I've seen his pictures in the papers," said a prominent member of the Present Era Club.

"My dear," this bending nearer, "Charles says he's often seen him leaving the Grand Central in a *cab!* and that sweet wife of his working all day long to help support him! He ought to be ashamed." They all agreed on this—and for that matter, Mortimer was ashamed.

"And you know, my dear, if it hadn't been for his rich uncle she wouldn't have this position in the library. I guess old Billings wanted to get them out of town out of the way," etc., *ad libitum.* For the story of the ex-assistant librarian's free trip to Europe had, of course, come out, being hardly of the nature to stay in.

Fortunately, the local ladies were too tactful to let Mrs. Billings know that they were aware of the secret. She, as has been intimated, was as much beloved as she was respected, notwithstanding the fact that she was by way of running the whole town—as well as her husband. Her husband was as proud of her as ever, but he no longer enjoyed being known as Mrs. Billings's husband. "Ah, glad to meet Mrs. Billings's husband," the village pastor said, with a kind smile, when Mrs. Billings had insisted upon dragging him into "the life" of the place. "Your uncle has sent a check for the new organ; I'm sure it would gratify *him* to hear of your identifying yourself with our church work." It was practically a command. Billings, to keep up the bluff, had to obey. So the check which he had hoped would let him out only pulled him in. The way of the liar is hard.

All this had made excellent stories to regale his intimates with at luncheon in town—for a while. But he no longer told them. When gibed with questions about the simple life he merely wore the far-away look which troubled his wife sometimes, making her the more solicitous and motherly.

It was the incident of the cigars which brought on the climax—a small thing in itself, but so was the straw which broke the camel's back. She had been worrying again about his extravagance, and Mortimer took her gentle reproof guiltily—for how else could he take it? So when a little later she asked him in a shy, embarrassed manner, "Mortimer, dear, would you mind telling me how much you pay for your cigars?" he was naturally frightened, for his special importation of cigars—famous among his friends—was about the only thing he had left of his former mode of life, the one comfort he could quietly keep up on the old scale, without being found out in this awful nightmare of simplicity. To him they were not a luxury, but now more than ever a necessity, which he would not abandon without a fight. Therefore, "Five cents, my dear," he said hastily, thus adding one more to the long list of lies which were becoming easier to tell and harder to remember every day. His wife made no comment, but one afternoon a week later, with the conscious manner of one sure to please, regardless of expense, she said, "Your birthday, dear," and presented him with a box of ten-cent cigars. "I remember how you used to enjoy a good smoke," she added fondly.

"Oh, you should not have done this," he said, kissing her while he groaned inwardly.

"Don't worry, dear boy," she said, reassuringly practical, "you see I made a little extra money last month writing an article for the *All Outdoors* magazine on 'How to Build an Italian Garden for $46.45.' Enjoy your cigars with a free mind, dearest."

So as they paced slowly up and down the small terrace this afternoon Mortimer was pathetically puffing one of his wife's dusty cigars, and coming to an important decision.

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"Clara," he said with the same manner as when he announced his failure a year ago, "I have something to tell you."

She turned and patted his arm with the same maternal instinct of protection as on that other occasion, but this time with poise, strength, and confidence. "Out with it, dearie. I've been expecting it for weeks. I have watched your poor troubled eyes. I knew it had to come sooner or later. But don't worry, dearest; I have an option on the old White farm. We'll go into flower raising. There, there, dearie, don't interrupt. I've always saved at least twenty-five per cent. of my housekeeping money and seventy-five per cent. of my salary—besides the sums I kept you from speculating with, you poor dear boy. I now know a lot about flowers, and you, dear," she concluded comfortingly, "you can be my foreman!"

Mortimer Billings, the great financier, turned and confronted his wife with a look she had never seen since he had become known as "Mrs. Billings's husband."

"Your foreman, eh?" he snapped out, hurling the bitter cigar stub among the flowers. "Well, I guess I *won't* be your foreman—not if I know myself. I've had enough of this; I can't stand any more. You're a success; you think I'm a failure—'Poor old Mortimer, poor old dub! Let's be sorry for him.' Well, here's where you can stop being sorry for *me!* I can't help it, whether it hurts you or not—it's *killing* me! Besides, it's all very nice, your affection, your tenderness, your solicitude; but you admire success, and I want your admiration, not merely your love."

"Mortimer! why are you so excited? Do you mean you have *not* failed again?"

"Again? Again! I never did fail, and by heavens, I never will—no matter what the doctor says. I'm worth double what I was last year, and I'm glad of it. I suppose you'll have a relapse, but that's the truth. I played a trick on you—do what you please about it."

What she pleased, when at last she took it in, need not be recorded here. She did admire success, it seems.

"And we'll buy the White farm—without any mortgage!" she cried.

"Yes; and we'll buy back the town house, too."

"No, Mortimer, if you don't mind," —there was more respect in her tone now— "not for me."

"But why not?"

"Will you promise not to tell?"

He promised. She looked down at the grass beneath their feet. "Because," she said, hiding her face in his coat, "the city is no place for children."

AGE

By William Winter

I

Snow and stars, the same as ever
In the days when I was young;
But their silver song, ah, never,
Never now is sung!

II

Cold the stars are, cold the earth is,
Everything is grim and cold!
Strange and drear the sound of mirth is—
Life and I are old!

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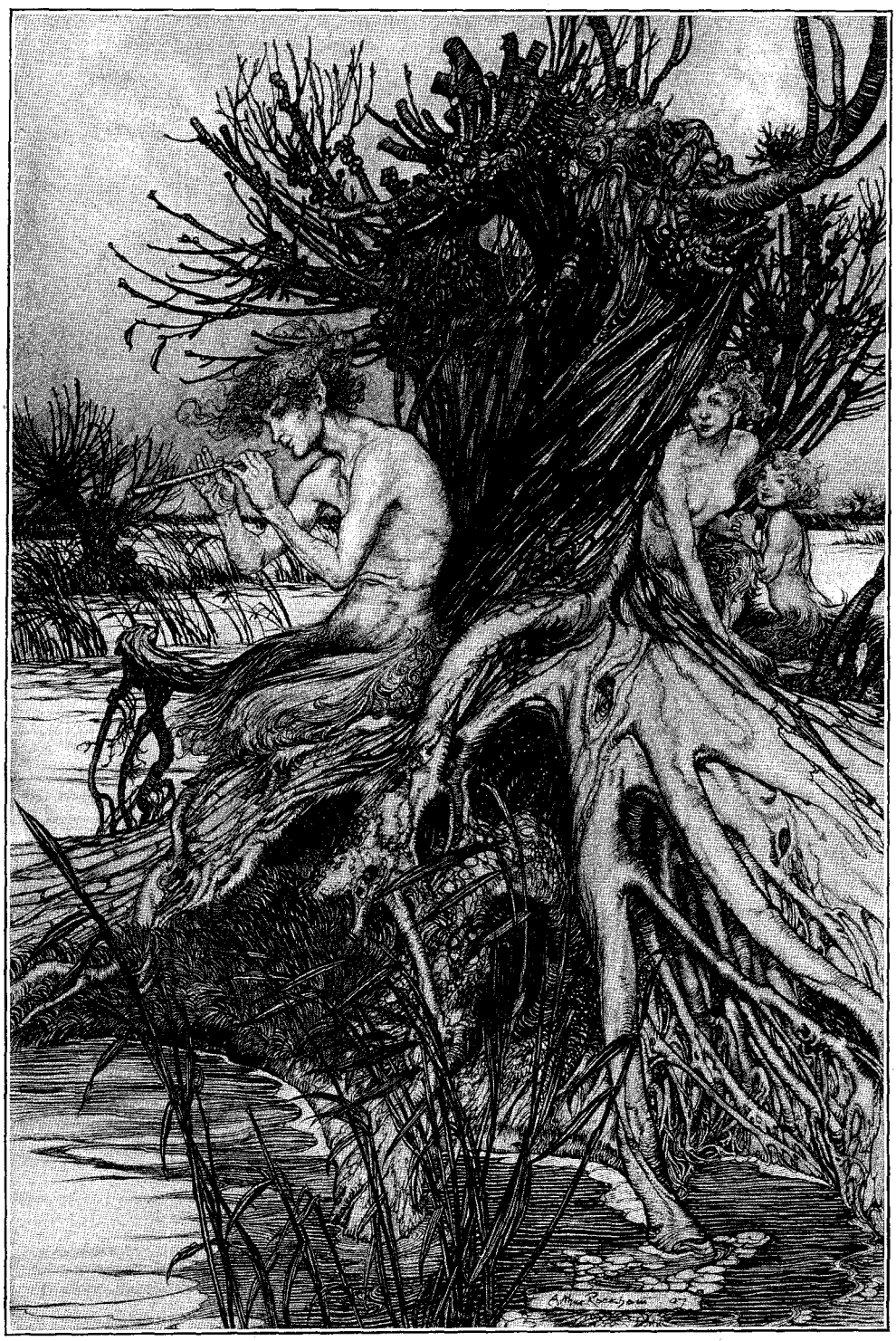

Drawn by Arthur Rackham.

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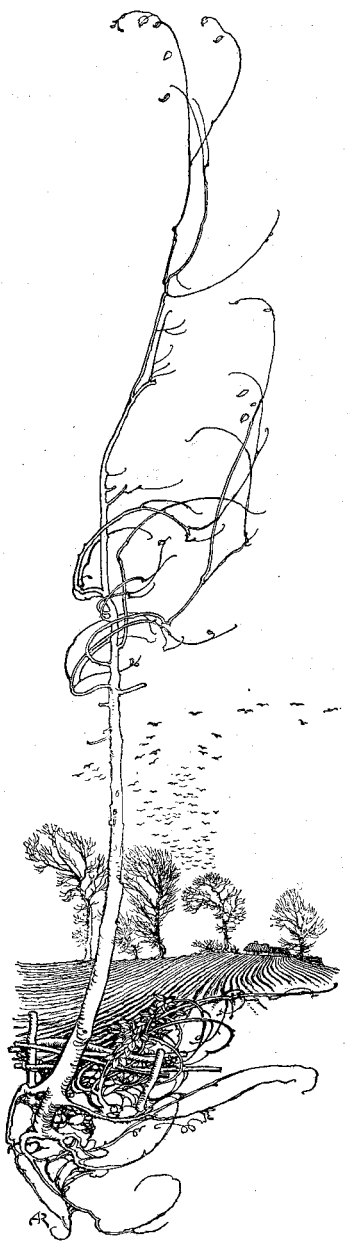
Pan o' Dreams

By William Hervey Woods

ILLUSTRATION BY ARTHUR RACKHAM



"WHAT dost thou here where the shivering reeds
Lean over the dark marsh streams,
O piper a-piping thy haunting tunes
That dwindle and die on the dim lagoons
In the waning autumn's gleams?"
And the piper said under his flying hair,
"I set me my nets for dreams."

"But do the dreams fly on the open marsh
By daylight? And these thy snares,
Where are they?" He lifted his stately head
And his lean brown fingers fluttering spread
And played; and the by-gone airs
Blew out of a summer of long ago
And lands where a lost love fares,

Till June came back o'er the whispering reeds
And pranked them in em'rald plumes—
(Oh, the sky was blue and the day was long!)
And the bubbling notes of the starling's song
Rang over the elder-blooms,
And the dark marsh waters in ripples ran
Far down in the grassy glooms.

Then he softlier blew, and the low winds woke
That whimper about the sills
And the doors, when the wintry day is done,
And the warmth and joy are gone with the sun,
Gone down behind lonely hills—
When a hush falls over the children's glee
At dusk in the desolate hills.

And never a lane nor a laughing brook
By memory's meadows lay,
But the cunning notes found a track to it,
And my gladdening heart won back to it
By the piper's path that day,
For his are the keys of the world that is,
And worlds that are worlds away.

And under the tune came a tingling joy
That ran in my veins like wine—
"O piper, thy nets are most strange," I cried,
"And their meshes of golden memories tied,
But the things you snare are mine."
"My pipes are the heart of the world," said he,
"And the dreams are mine and thine."

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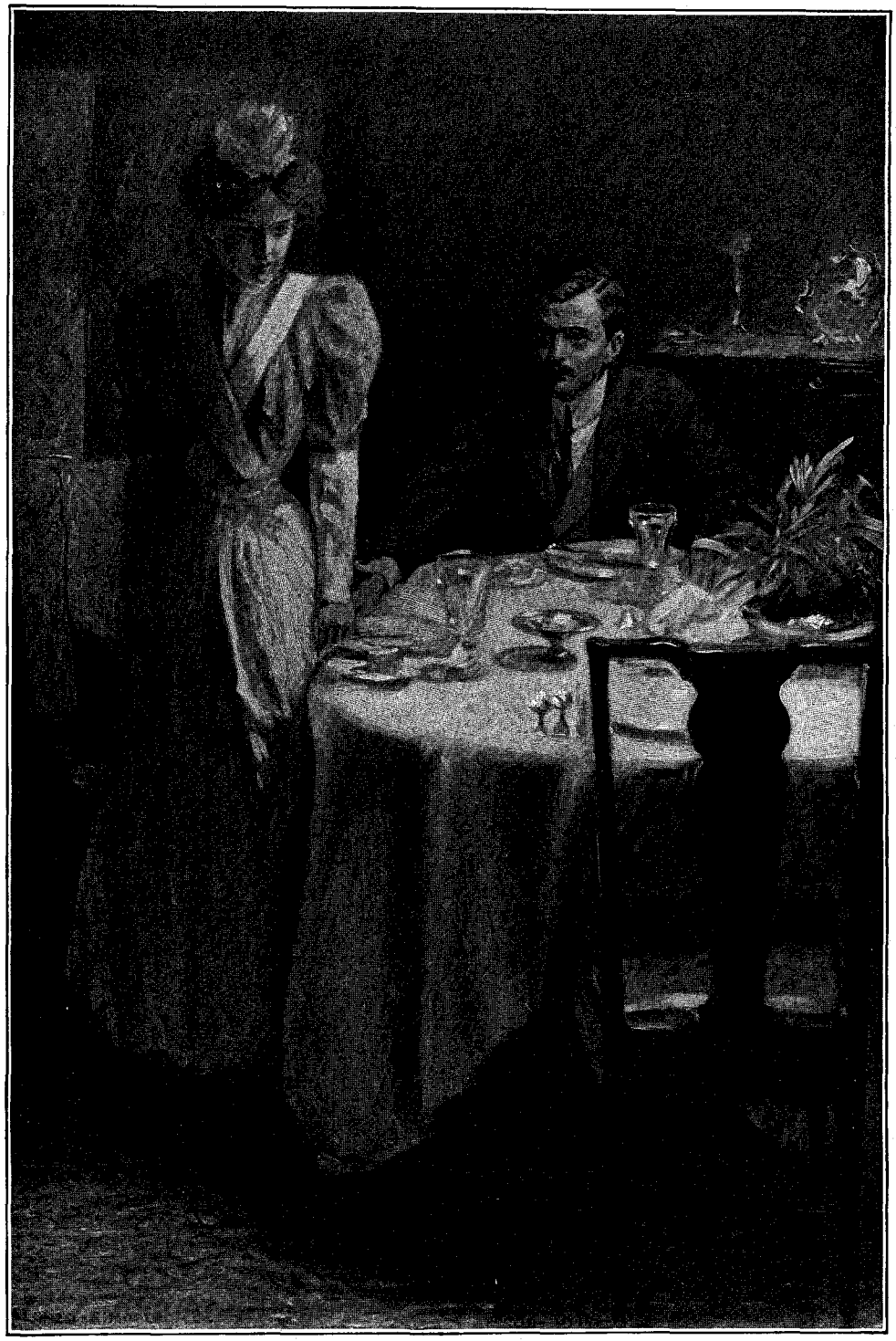

Drawn by Alonzo Kimball

Under the challenge of his tone Justine rose to her feet.—Page 212.

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THE FRUIT OF THE TREE

BY EDITH WHARTON

ILLUSTRATION BY ALONZO KIMBALL

BOOK II—(Continued)

XXV

SOME five days later, Bessy, languidly glancing through the midday mail, uttered a slight exclamation as she withdrew her finger-tip from the flap of an envelope which she had begun to open.

It was a black sleety day, with an east wind bowing the trees beyond the drenched window-panes, and the two friends, after luncheon, had withdrawn to the library, where Justine sat writing notes for Bessy, while the latter lay back in her arm-chair, in the state of dreamy listlessness into which she always sank when not under the stimulus of amusement or exercise.

"I beg your pardon! I thought it was for me," she said, holding out the letter to Justine.

The latter reddened as she glanced at the superscription. It had not occurred to her that Amherst would reply to her appeal: she had pictured him springing on the first north-bound train, perhaps not even pausing to announce his return to his wife. . . And to receive his letter under Bessy's eye was undeniably embarrassing, since Justine felt the necessity of jealously guarding the secret of her intervention.

But under Bessy's eye she certainly was—it rested on her curiously, speculatively, with an under-gleam of malicious significance.

"So stupid of me—I can't imagine why I should have expected my husband to write to me!" Bessy continued, leaning back in lazy contemplation of her other letters, but still obliquely including Justine in her angle of vision.

The latter, after a moment's pause, broke the seal and read.

"Millvale, Georgia.

"My dear Miss Brent,

"Your letter reached me yesterday and I have thought it over carefully. I appreciate the impulse that prompted it—but I don't know that any friend, however kind and discerning, can give the final advice in such matters. You tell me you are sure my wife will not ask me to return—forgive me for saying that, under present conditions, that seems to me a sufficient reason for staying away.

"Meanwhile, I assure you that I have remembered all you said to me that day. I have made no binding arrangement here—nothing to involve my future action—and I have done this solely because you asked it. This will tell you better than words how much I value your advice, and what strong reasons I must have for not following it now.

"I suppose there are no more exploring parties in this weather. I wish I could show Cicely some of the birds down here.

"Yours faithfully,

"John Amherst.

"Please don't let my wife ride Impulse."

Latent under Justine's acute consciousness of what this letter meant, was the vivid sense of Bessy's inferences and conjectures. She could feel them actually piercing the page in her hand, like some hypersensitive visual organ to which matter offers no obstruction. Or rather, baffled in their endeavour, they were evoking out of the unseen, heaven knew what fantastic structure of intrigue—scrawling over the innocent page with burning evidences of perfidy and collusion. . . .

One thing became instantly clear to her: she must show the letter to Bessy. She ran her eyes over it again, trying to disentangle the consequences. There was the allusion to their talk in town—well, she had told Bessy of that talk! But the careless reference to their woodland excursions—what might not Bessy, in her present mood, make of it? Justine's uppermost thought was of distress at the failure of her plan. Perhaps she might still have induced Amherst to return, had it not been for this betrayal of her attempt; but now that hope was destroyed.

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She raised her eyes and met Bessy's. "Will you read it?" she said, holding out the letter.

Bessy received it with lifted brows, and a protesting murmur—but as she read, Justine saw the blood mount under her clear skin, invade the temples, the nape, even the little flower-like ears; then it receded as suddenly, ebbing at last from the very lips, so that the smile with which she looked up from her reading was as white as if she had been under the stress of physical pain.

"So you have written my husband to come back?"

"As you see."

Bessy looked her straight in the eyes. "I am very much obliged to you—extremely obliged!"

Justine met the look quietly. "Which means that you resent my interference——"

"Oh, I leave you to call it that!" Bessy mocked, tossing the letter down on the table at her side.

"Bessy! Don't take it in that way. If I made a mistake I did so with the hope of helping you. How can I stand by, after all these months together, and see you deliberately destroying your life without trying to stop you?"

The smile withered on Bessy's lips. "It is very dear and good of you—I know you're never happy unless you're helping people—but in this case I can only repeat what my husband says. He and I don't often look at things in the same light—but I quite agree with him that the management of such matters is best left to—to the persons concerned."

Justine hesitated. "I might answer that, if you take that view, it was inconsistent of you to talk with me so openly. You've certainly made me feel that you wanted help—you've turned to me for it. But perhaps that does not justify my writing to Mr. Amherst without your knowing it."

Bessy laughed. "Ah, my dear, you knew that if you asked me the letter would never be sent!"

"Perhaps I did," said Justine simply. "I was trying to help you against your will."

"Well, you see the result." Bessy laid a derisive touch on the letter. "Do you understand now whose fault it is if I am alone?"

Justine faced her steadily. "There is nothing in Mr. Amherst's letter to make me change my opinion. I still think it lies with you to bring him back."

Bessy raised a glittering face to her—all hardness and laughter. "Such modesty, my dear! As if I had a chance of succeeding where you failed!"

She sprang up, brushing the curls from her temples with a petulant gesture. "Don't mind me if I'm cross—but I've had a dose of preaching from Maria Ansell, and I don't know why my friends should treat me like a puppet without any preferences of my own, and press me upon a man who has done his best to show that he doesn't want me. As a matter of fact, he and I are luckily agreed on that point too—and I'm afraid all the good advice in the world won't persuade us to change our opinion!"

Justine held her ground. "If I believed that of either of you, I shouldn't have written—I should not be pleading with you now— And Mr. Amherst doesn't believe it either," she added, after a pause, conscious of the risk she was taking, but thinking the words might act like a blow in the face of a person sinking under a deadly narcotic.

Bessy's smile deepened to a sneer. "I see you've talked me over thoroughly—and on *his* views I ought perhaps not to have risked an opinion——"

"We have not talked you over," Justine exclaimed. "Mr. Amherst could never talk of you . . . in the way you think. . . ." And under the light staccato of Bessy's laugh, she found resolution to add: "It is not in that way that I know what he feels."

"Ah? I should be curious to hear, then——"

Justine turned to the letter, which still lay between them. "Will you read the last sentence again? The postscript, I mean."

Bessy, after a surprised glance at her, took the letter up with the deprecating murmur of one who acts under compulsion rather than dispute about a trifle.

"The postscript? Let me see. . . 'Don't let my wife ride Impulse'.— *Et puis?*" she murmured, dropping the page again.

"Well, does it tell you nothing? It's a cold letter—at first I thought so—the letter of a man who believes himself deeply hurt—oh, you see I'm not careful of my words!—so deeply that he will make no advance, no sign of relenting. That's what I thought when I first read it . . . but the postscript undoes it all."

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Justine, as she spoke, had drawn near Bessy, laying a hand on her arm, and shedding on her the radiance of a face all charity and sweet compassion. It was her rare gift, at such moments, to forget her own relation to the person for whose fate she was concerned, to cast aside all consciousness of any criticism and distrust in the heart she strove to reach, as pitiful people forget their physical timidity in the attempt to help a wounded animal.

For a moment Bessy seemed to waver. The colour flickered faintly upon her cheek, her long lashes drooped—she had the tenderest lids!—and all her face seemed melting under the beams of Justine's ardour. But the letter was still in her hand—her eyes, in sinking, fell upon it, and she sounded beneath her breath the fatal phrase: "I have done this solely because you asked it."

"After such a tribute to your influence I don't wonder you feel competent to set everybody's affairs in order! But take my advice, my dear—*don't* ask me not to ride Impulse!"

The pity froze on Justine's lip: she shrank back cut to the quick. For a moment the silence between the two women rang with the flight of arrowy, wounding thoughts; then Bessy's anger flagged suddenly, she gave one of her embarrassed half-laughs, and turning back, laid a deprecating touch on her friend's arm.

"I didn't mean that, Justine . . . but let us not talk now—I can't!"

Justine did not move: the reaction could not come quite as quickly in her case. But she turned on Bessy two eyes full of pardon, full of speechless pity . . . and Bessy received the look silently before she moved toward the door and went out.

"Oh, poor thing—poor thing!" Justine gasped as the door closed.

She had already forgotten her own hurt—she was alone again with Bessy's sterile pain. She stood staring before her for a moment—then her eyes fell on Amherst's letter, which had fluttered to the floor between them. The fatal letter! If it had not come at that unlucky moment perhaps she might still have gained her end. . . . She picked it up and re-read it. Yes—there were phrases in it that a wounded suspicious heart might misconstrue. . . . Yet Bessy's last words had absolved her. . . . Why had she not answered them? Why had she stood there dumb? The blow to her pride had been too deep, had been dealt too unexpectedly—for one miserable moment she had thought first of herself! Ah, that importunate, irrepressible self—the *moi haïssable* of the Christian—if only one could tear it out of one's breast! She had missed an opportunity—her last opportunity perhaps! By this time, even, a hundred hostile influences, cold whispers of vanity, of selfishness, of worldly pride, might have drawn their freezing ring about Bessy's heart. . . .

Justine started up to follow her . . . then paused, recalling her last words. "Let us not talk now—I can't!" She had no right to intrude on that bleeding privacy—if the chance had been hers she had lost it. She dropped back into her seat at the desk, hiding her face in her hands. . . .

Presently she heard the clock strike, and true to her tireless instinct of activity, she lifted her head, took up her pen, and went on mechanically with the correspondence she had dropped when Amherst's letter came. . . . It was hard at first to collect her thoughts, or even to summon to her pen the conventional phrases that sufficed for most of the notes. Groping for a word, she pushed aside her writing and stared for a moment at the sallow frozen landscape framed by the window at which she sat. The sleet had ceased, and hollows of sunless blue showed through the driving wind-clouds. A hard sky and a hard ground—frost-bound ringing earth under rigid ice-mailed trees.

As Justine looked out, shivering a little at the scene, she saw a woman's figure riding down the avenue toward the gate. The figure disappeared behind a clump of evergreens—showed again farther down, through the boughs of a skeleton beech—and revealed itself in the next open space as Bessy—Bessy in the saddle on a day of glaring frost, when no horse could keep his footing out of a walk!

Justine went to the window and strained her eyes for a confirming glimpse. Yes—it was Bessy! There was no mistaking that light flexible figure, every line swaying true to the beat of the horse's stride. But Justine remembered that Bessy had not meant to ride—had countermanded her horse because of the bad going. . . . Well, she was a perfect horsewoman and had no doubt chosen her surest-footed mount . . . probably the brown cob, Tony Lumpkin. . . .

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But when did Tony's sides shine so bright through the leafless branches? And when did he sweep his rider on with such long free play of the hind-quarters? Horse and rider shot into sight again, rounding the curve of the avenue near the gates, and in a sudden break of sunlight Justine saw the glitter of chestnut flanks—and remembered that Impulse was the only chestnut in the stables. . . .

She went back to her seat and continued writing. Bessy had left a formidable heap of bills and letters; and when this was demolished, Justine had her own correspondence to despatch. She had heard that morning from the matron of Saint Elizabeth's: an interesting "case" was offered her, but she must come within two days. For the first few hours she had wavered, loath to leave Lynbrook without some definite light on her friend's future; but now Amherst's letter had shed that light—or rather, had deepened the obscurity—and she had no pretext for lingering on where her uselessness had been so amply demonstrated.

She wrote to the matron accepting the engagement; and the acceptance involved the writing of other letters, the general reorganizing of that minute polity, the life of Justine Brent. She smiled a little to think how easily she could be displaced and transplanted—how slender were her material impedimenta, how few her invisible bonds! She was as light and detachable as a dead leaf on the autumn breeze—and yet she was in the season of sap and flower, the season when there is life and song in the trees!

But she did not think long of herself, for an undefinable anxiety ran through her thoughts like a black thread. It found silent expression, now and then, in the long glances she threw through the window—in her rising to consult the clock and compare her watch with it—in a nervous snatch of humming as she paced the room once or twice before going back to her desk. . . .

Why was Bessy so late? Dusk was falling already—the early end of the cold slate-hued day. But Bessy always rode late—there was always a rational answer to Justine's irrational conjectures. . . It was the sight of those chestnut flanks that tormented her—she knew of Bessy's previous struggles with the mare. But the indulging of idle apprehensions was not in her nature, and when the tea-tray came, and with it Cicely, sparkling from a gusty walk, and coral-pink in her cloud of crinkled hair, Justine sprang up and cast off her cares.

It cost her a pang, again, to see the lamps lit and the curtains drawn—shutting in the warmth and brightness of the house from that wind-swept frozen twilight through which Bessy rode alone. But the icy touch of the thought slipped from Justine's mind as she bent above the tea-tray, gravely measuring Cicely's milk into a "grown-up" teacup, hearing the confidential details of the child's day, and capping them with banter and fantastic narrative.

She was not sorry to go—ah, no! The house had become a prison to her, with ghosts walking its dreary floors. But to lose Cicely would be bitter—she had not felt how bitter till the child pressed against her in the warm firelight, insisting raptly, with little sharp elbows stabbing her knee: "And *then* what happened, Justine?"

The door opened, and some one came in to look at the fire. Justine, through the mazes of her fairy-tale, was dimly conscious that it was Knowles, and not one of the footmen . . . the proud Knowles, who never mended the fires himself. . . . As he passed out again, hovering slowly down the long room, she rose, leaving Cicely on the hearth-rug, and followed him to the door.

"Has Mrs. Amherst not come in?" she asked, not knowing why she wished to ask it out of the child's hearing.

"No, Miss. I looked in myself to see—thinking she might have come by the side-door."

"She may have gone to her sitting-room."

"She's not upstairs."

They both paused. Then Justine said: "What horse was she riding?"

"Impulse, Miss." The butler looked at his large responsible watch. "It's not late —" he said, more to himself than to her.

"No. Has she been riding Impulse lately?"

"No, Miss. Not since that day the mare nearly had her off. I understood Mr. Amherst did not wish it."

Justine went back to Cicely and the fairy-tale.—As she took up the thread of the Princess's adventures, she asked herself why she had ever had any hope of helping Bessy. The seeds of disaster were in the poor creature's soul. . . . Even when she appeared

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to be moved, lifted out of herself, her escaping impulses were always dragged back to the magnetic centre of hard distrust and resistance that sometimes forms the core of soft-fibred natures. As she had answered her husband's last appeal by her flight to the woman he disliked, so she answered this one by riding the horse he feared. . . . Justine's last illusions crumbled. The distance between two such natures was unspannable. Amherst had done well to remain away . . . and with a tidal rush her sympathies swept back to his side. . . .

The governess came to claim Cicely. One of the footmen came to put another log on the fire. Then the rite of removing the tea-table was majestically performed—the ceremonial that had so often jarred on Amherst's nerves. As she watched it, Justine had a vague sense of the immutability of the household routine—a queer awed feeling that, whatever happened, a machine so perfectly adjusted would work on inexorably, like a natural law. . . .

She rose to look out of the window, staring vainly into blackness between the parted curtains. As she turned back, passing the writing-table, she noticed that Cicely's irruption had made her forget to post her letters—an unusual oversight. A glance at the clock told her that she was not too late for the mail—reminding her, at the same time, that it was scarcely three hours since Bessy had started on her ride. . . . She realized the foolishness of her fears. Even in winter, Bessy often rode for more than three hours; and now that the days were growing longer——

Suddenly reassured, Justine went out into the hall, intending to carry her batch of letters to the red pillar-box by the door. As she did so, a cold blast struck her. Could it be that for once the faultless routine of the house had been relaxed, that one of the servants had left the outer door ajar? She walked over to the vestibule—yes, both doors were wide. The night rushed in on a vicious wind. As she pushed the vestibule door shut, she heard the dogs sniffing and whining on the threshold. She crossed the vestibule, and heard voices and the tramping of feet in the darkness—then saw a lantern gleam. Suddenly Knowles shot out of the night—the lantern struck up on his bleached face.

Justine, stepping back, pressed the electric button in the wall, and the wide doorstep was abruptly illuminated, with its huddled, pushing, heavily-breathing group. . . . black figures writhing out of darkness, strange faces distorted in the glare.

"Bessy!" she cried, and sprang forward; but suddenly Wyant was before her, his hand on her arm; and as the dreadful group struggled by into the hall, he froze her to him with a whisper: "The spine——"

XXVI

WITHIN Justine there was a moment's darkness; then, like terror-struck workers rallying to their tasks, every faculty was again at its post, receiving and transmitting signals, taking observations, anticipating orders, making her cleared brain ring with the hum of a controlled activity.

She had known the sensation before—the transmuting of terror and pity into this miraculous lucidity of thought and action; but never had it snatched her from such depths of pain. Oh, thank heaven for her knowledge now—for the trained mind that could take command of her senses and bend them firmly to its service!

Wyant seconded her well, after a moment's ague-fit of fear. She pitied and pardoned the moment, aware of its cause, and respecting him for the way in which he rose above it into the clear air of professional self-command. Through the first hours they worked shoulder to shoulder, conscious of each other only as of kindred will-powers, stretched to the utmost tension of discernment and activity, and hardly needing speech or look to further their swift co-operation. It was thus that she had known him in the hospital, in the heat of his youthful zeal: the doctor she liked best to work with, because no other so tempered ardour with judgment.

The great surgeon, arriving from town at midnight, confirmed his diagnosis: there was undoubted injury to the spine. Other consultants were summoned in haste, and in the winter dawn the verdict was pronounced —a fractured vertebra, and possible lesion of the cord. . . .

Justine got a moment alone when the surgeons returned to the sick-room. Other nurses were there now, capped, aproned,

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quickly and silently unpacking their appliances. . . . She must call a halt, clear her brain again, decide rapidly what was to be done next. . . . Oh, if only the crawling hours could bring Amherst! It was strange that there was no telegram yet—no, not strange, after all, since it was barely six in the morning, and her message had not been despatched till seven the night before. It was not unlikely that, in that little southern settlement, the telegraph office closed at six.

She stood in Bessy's sitting-room, her forehead pressed to the window-pane, her eyes straining out into the thin February darkness, through which the morning star swam white. As soon as she had yielded her place to the other nurses her nervous tension relaxed, and she hung again above the deeps of anguish, terrified and weak. In a moment the necessity for action would snatch her back to a firm footing—her thoughts would clear, her will affirm itself, all the wheels of the complex machine resume their functions. But now she felt only the horror. . . .

She knew so well what was going on in the next room. Dr. Garford, the great surgeon, who had known her at Saint Elizabeth's, had evidently expected her to take command of the nurses he had brought from town; but there were enough without her, and there were other cares which, for the moment, she only could assume—the despatching of messages to the scattered family, the incessant telephoning and telegraphing to town, the general guidance of the household, swinging suddenly rudderless in the tide of disaster. Cicely, above all, must be watched over and guarded from alarm. The little governess, reduced to a twittering heap of fears, had been quarantined in a distant room till reason returned to her; and the child, meanwhile, slept quietly in the old nurse's care.

Cicely would wake presently, and Justine must go up to her with a bright face; other duties would press thick on the heels of this; their feet were already on the threshold. But meanwhile she could only follow in imagination what was going on in that other room. . . .

She had often thought with dread of such a contingency. She always sympathized too much with her patients—she knew it was the joint in her armour. Her quick-gushing pity lay too near that professional exterior which she had managed to endue with such a bright glaze of insensibility that some sentimental patients—without much the matter—had been known to call her "a little hard." How, then, should she steel herself if it fell to her lot to witness a cruel accident to some one she loved, and to have to perform a nurse's duties, steadily, expertly, unflinchingly, while every fibre was torn with inward anguish?

She knew the horror of it now—and she knew also that her self-enforced exile from the sick-room was a hundred times worse. To stand there, knowing, with each tick of the clock, what was being said and done within—how the great luxurious room, with its pale draperies and scented cushions, and the hundred pretty trifles strewing the lace toilet-table and the delicate old furniture, was being swept bare, cleared for action like a ship's deck, drearily garnished with rows of instruments, rolls of medicated cotton, oiled silk, bottles, bandages, water-pillows—all the grim paraphernalia of the awful rites of pain—to know this, and to be able to call up with torturing vividness that poor pale face on the pillows, vague-eyed, expressionless, perhaps, as she had last seen it, or—worse yet!—stirred already with the first creeping pangs of consciousness: to have these images slowly, deliberately burn themselves into her brain, and to be aware, at the same time, of that underlying moral disaster, of which the accident seemed the monstrous outward symbol—ah, this was worse than anything she had ever dreamed!

She knew, of course, that the final verdict could not be pronounced till the operation which was about to take place should reveal the extent of injury to the spine. Bessy, in falling, must have struck on the back of her head and shoulders, and it was but too probable that the fractured vertebra had caused a bruise if not a lesion of the spinal cord. In that case paralysis was certain—and a slow crawling death the almost inevitable outcome. There had been cases, of course—Justine's professional memory evoked them—cases of so-called "recovery," where actual death was kept at bay, a semblance of life preserved for years in the poor petrified body. . . . But the mind shrank from such a fate for Bessy. And it might still be that the injury to the spine was not grave—though, here again, the fracturing of the fourth vertebra was ominous.

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The door opened and some one came from the inner room—Wyant, in search of an instrument-case. Justine turned and they looked at each other.

"It will be now?"

"Yes. Dr. Garford asked if there was no one you could send for."

"No one but the Halford Gaineses. They'll be here this evening, I suppose."

They exchanged a discouraged glance, knowing how little difference the presence of the Halford Gaineses would make.

"He wanted to know if there was no telegram from Amherst."

"No."

"Then they mean to begin."

A nursemaid appeared in the doorway. "Miss Cicely—" she said; and Justine bounded upstairs.

The day's work had begun. From Cicely to the governess—from the governess to the house-keeper—from the telephone to the writing-table—Justine vibrated back and forth, quick, noiseless, self-possessed—sobering, guiding, controlling her confused and panic-stricken world. It seemed to her that half the day had elapsed before the telegraph office at Lynbrook opened—she was at the telephone at the stroke of the hour. No telegram? Only one—a message from Halford Gaines—"Arrive at eight tonight." Amherst was still silent! Was there a difference of time to be allowed for? She tried to remember, to calculate, but her brain was too crowded with other thoughts. . . . She turned away from the instrument discouraged.

Whenever she had time to think, she was overwhelmed by the weight of her solitude. Mr. Langhope was in Egypt, accessible only through a London banker—Mrs. Ansell presumably wandering on the continent. Her cables might not reach them for days. And among the throng of Lynbrook habitués, she knew not to whom to turn. To loose the Telfer tribe and Mrs. Carbury upon that stricken house—her thought revolted from it, and she was thankful to know that February had dispersed their migratory flock to southern shores. But if only Amherst would come!

Cicely and the tranquillized governess had been despatched on a walk with the dogs, and Justine was returning upstairs when she met one of the servants with a telegram. She tore it open with a great throb of relief. It was her own message to Amherst—*address unknown*. . . .

Had she misdirected it, then? In that first blinding moment her mind might so easily have failed her. But no—there was the name of the town before her . . . Millfield, Georgia . . . the same name as in his letter. . . . She had made no mistake, but he was gone! Gone—and without leaving an address. . . . For a moment her tired mind refused to work; then she roused herself, ran down the stairs again, and rang up the telegraph-office. The thing to do, of course, was to telegraph to the owner of the mills—of whose very name she was ignorant!—enquiring where Amherst was, and asking him to forward the dreadful message. Precious hours must be lost meanwhile—but, after all, they were waiting for no one upstairs.

The verdict had been pronounced: dislocation and fracture of the fourth vertebra, with consequent injury to the spinal cord. Dr. Garford and Wyant came out alone to tell her. The surgeon ran over the technical details, her brain instantly at attention as he developed his diagnosis and issued his orders. She asked no questions as to the future—she knew it was impossible to tell. But there were no immediate signs of a fatal ending: the patient had rallied well, and the general conditions were not unfavourable.

"You have heard from Mr. Amherst?" Dr. Garford concluded.

"Not yet. . . . He may be travelling," Justine faltered, unwilling to say that her telegram had been returned. As she spoke there was a tap on the door, and a folded paper was handed in—a telegram telephoned from the village.

"Amherst gone South America to study possibilities cotton growing have cabled our correspondent at Buenos Ayres."

Concealment was no longer possible. Justine handed the message to the surgeon.

"Ah—and there would be no chance of finding his address among Mrs. Amherst's papers?"

"I think not—no."

"Well—we must keep her alive, Wyant."

"Yes, sir."

At dusk, Justine sat in the library, waiting for Cicely to be brought to her. A lull had sunk upon the house—a new order developed out of the morning's chaos. With

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soundless steps, with lowered voices, the machinery of life was carried on. And Justine, caught in one of the pauses of inaction which she had fought off since morning, was reliving, for the hundredth time, her few moments at Bessy's bedside. . . .

She had been summoned in the course of the afternoon, and stealing into the darkened room, had bent over the bed while the nurses noiselessly withdrew. There lay the white face which had been burnt into her inward vision—the motionless body, and the head stirring ceaselessly, as though to release the agitation of the imprisoned limbs. Bessy's eyes turned to her, drawing her down.

"Am I going to die, Justine?"

"No."

"The pain is . . . so awful. . . ."

"It will pass . . . you will sleep. . . ."

"Cicely——"

"She has gone for a walk. You will see her presently.

The eyes faded, releasing Justine. She stole away, and the nurses came back.

Bessy had spoken of Cicely—but not a word of her husband! Perhaps her poor dazed mind groped for him, or perhaps it shrank from his name. . . . Justine was thankful for her silence. For the moment her heart was bitter against Amherst. Why, so soon after her appeal and his answer, had he been false to the spirit of their agreement? This unannounced, unexplained departure was nothing less than a breach of his tacit pledge—the pledge not to break definitely with Lynbrook. And why had he gone to South America? She drew her aching brows together, trying to retrace a vague memory of some allusion to the cotton-growing capabilities of the region. . . . Yes, he had spoken of it once in describing to her the world's area of cotton-production. But what impulse had sent him off on such an exploration? Mere unrest, perhaps—the intolerable burden of his useless life? The questions spun round and round in her head, weary, profitless, yet persistent. . . .

It was a relief when Cicely came—a relief to measure out the cambric tea, to make the terrier beg for ginger-bread, even to take up the thread of the interrupted fairy-tale—though through it all she was wrung by the thought that, just twenty-four hours earlier, she and the child had sat in the same place, listening for the trot of Bessy's horse on the frozen ground. . . .

So the day passed: the hands of the clocks moved, food was cooked and served, blinds were drawn up or down, lamps lit and fires renewed . . . all these tokens of the passage of time took place before her, while her real consciousness seemed to hang in some dim central void, where nothing happened, nothing would ever happen. . . .

And now Cicely was in bed, the last "long-distance" call was answered, the last orders to kitchen and stable had been despatched, Wyant had stolen down to her with his hourly report—"no change"—and she was waiting alone in the library for the Gaineses to come.

Carriage-wheels on the gravel: they were there at last. Justine started up and went into the hall to meet them. As she passed out of the library the outer door opened, and the gusty night swooped in—as, at the same hour the day before, it had swooped in ahead of the dreadful procession—preceding now the carriageful of Hanaford relations: Mr. Gaines, red-glazed, brief and interrogatory; Westy, small, nervous, ill at ease with his grief; and Mrs. Gaines, supreme in the possession of a consolatory yet funereal manner, and sinking on Justine's breast with the solemn whisper: "Have you sent for the clergyman?"

XXVII

THE house was empty again.

A week had passed since Bessy's accident, and friends and relations had dispersed. The household had fallen into its routine, the routine of sickness and silence, and once more the perfectly-adjusted machine was working on steadily, inexorably, like a natural law. . . .

So at least it seemed to Justine's nerves, intolerably stretched, at times, on the rack of solitude, of suspense, of forebodings. She had been thankful when the Gaineses left—doubly thankful when a telegram from Bermuda declared Mrs. Carbury to be "in despair" at her inability to fly to Bessy's side—thankful even that Mr. Tredegar's professional engagements made it impossible for him to do more than come down, every second or third day, for a few hours; yet, though in some ways it was a relief to be again in sole authority, there were moments when the weight of responsibility, and the

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inability to cry out her fears, her doubts, her uncertainties, seemed almost more than she could bear.

Wyant was her chief reliance. He had risen so gallantly above his weakness, become again so completely the zealous and indefatigable young physician of former days, that she began to accuse herself of injustice in ascribing to physical causes the vague eye and tremulous hand which might merely have betokened a passing access of nervous sensibility. Now, at any rate, he had his nerves so well under control, and had shown such a grasp of the case, and such marked executive capacity, that on the third day after the accident Dr. Garford, withdrawing his own surgical assistant, had left him in command at Lynbrook.

At the same time, also, Justine had taken up her attendance in the sick-room, replacing one of the subordinate nurses who had been suddenly called away. She had done this the more willingly because Bessy, who was now conscious for the greater part of the time, had asked for her once or twice, and had seemed easier when she was in the room. But she still gave only occasional assistance, relieving the other nurses when they dined or rested, but keeping herself partly free in order to have an eye on the household, and to give a few hours daily to Cicely.

All this had become part of a system that already seemed as old as memory. She could hardly recall what life had been before the accident—the seven dreadful days seemed as long as the days of creation. Every morning she rose to the same report —"no change"—and every day passed without a word from Amherst. Minor news, of course, had come: poor Mr. Langhope, at length overtaken at Wady Halfa, was hastening back as fast as ship and rail could carry him; Mrs. Ansell, imprisoned at Algiers with her invalid, cabled distressful messages of inquiry; but still no word from Amherst. The correspondent at Buenos Ayres had simply cabled: "Not here. Will enquire"—and since then, silence. . . .

Justine had taken to sitting in a small room beyond Amherst's bedroom, near enough to Bessy to be within call, yet accessible to the rest of the household. The walls were hung with old prints, and with two or three photographs of early Italian pictures; and in a low bookcase Amherst had put the books he had brought from Hanaford—the English poets, the Greek dramatists, some text-books of biology and kindred subjects, and a few stray well-worn volumes: Lecky's European Morals, Carlyle's translation of Wilhelm Meister, Seneca, Epictetus, a German grammar, a pocket Bacon.

It was unlike any other room at Lynbrook—even through her benumbing misery, Justine felt the relief of escaping there from the rest of the great soulless house. Sometimes she took up one of the books and read a page or two, letting the beat of the verse lull her throbbing brain, or the strong words of stoic wisdom sink into her heart. And even when there was no time for these brief flights from reality it soothed her to feel herself in the presence of great thoughts —to know that in this room, among these books, another restless baffled mind had sought escape from the "dusty answer" of life. Her hours there made her think less bitterly of Amherst—but also, alas, made her see more clearly the irreconcilable difference between the two natures she had striven to reunite. That which was the essence of life to one was a meaningless shadow to the other; and the gulf between them was too wide for the imagination of either to bridge.

As she sat there on the seventh afternoon, there was a knock on the door and Wyant entered. She had only time to notice that he was very pale—she had been struck, once or twice during the week, with his look of sudden exhaustion, which passed as quickly as it came—then she saw that he carried a telegram, and her mind flew back to its central anxiety. She grew pale herself as she read the message and handed it to Wyant.

"He has been found—at Corrientes. It will take him at least a month to get here."

"A month—good God!"

"And it may take Mr. Langhope longer." Their eyes met. "It's too long——?" She asked.

"I don't know—I don't know." He shivered slightly, turning away into the window.

Justine sat down to dash off messages to Mr. Tredegar and the Gaineses: Amherst's return must be made known at once. When she glanced up, Wyant was standing near her. His air of intense weariness had passed, and he looked calm and ready for action.

"Shall I take these down?"

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"No. Ring, please. I want to ask you a few questions."

The servant who answered the bell brought in a tea-tray, and Justine, having despatched the telegrams, seated herself and began to pour out her tea. Food had revolted her during the first anguished unsettled days; but with the resumption of the nurse's systematic habits the nurse's punctual appetite returned. Every drop of nervous energy must be husbanded now, and only sleep and nourishment could fill the empty cisterns.

She held out a cup to Wyant, but he drew back with a gesture of aversion.

"Thanks; I'm not hungry."

"You ought to eat more."

"No, no. I'm very well."

She lifted her head, revived by the warm draught. The mechanical act of nourishment performed, her mind leapt back to the prospect of Amherst's return. A whole month before he reached Lynbrook! He had instructed her where news might find him on the way . . . but a whole month to wait!

She looked at Wyant, and they read each other's thoughts.

"It's a long time," he said.

"Yes."

"But Garford can do wonders—and she's very strong."

Justine shuddered. Just so a skilled agent of the Inquisition might have spoken, calculating how much longer the power of suffering might be artificially preserved in a body broken on the wheel. . . .

"How does she seem to you today?"

"The general conditions are about the same. The heart keeps up wonderfully, but there is a little more oppression of the diaphragm."

"Yes—her breathing is harder. Last night she suffered horribly at times."

"Oh—she'll suffer," Wyant murmured. "Of course the hypodermics can be increased."

"Just what did Dr. Garford say this morning?"

"He is astonished at her strength."

"But there's no hope?—I don't know why I ask!"

"Hope?" Wyant looked at her. "You mean of what's called recovery—of deferring death indefinitely?"

She nodded.

"How can Garford tell—or any one? We all know there have been cases where such injury to the cord has not caused death. This may be one of those cases; but the biggest man couldn't tell now."

Justine hid her eyes. "What a fate!"

"Recovery? Yes. Keeping people alive in such cases is one of the refinements of cruelty that it was left for Christianity to invent."

"And yet——?"

"And yet—it's got to be! Science herself says so—not for the patient, of course; but for herself—for unborn generations, rather. Queer, isn't it? The two creeds are at one."

Justine murmured through her clasped hands: "I wish she were not so strong——"

"Yes; it's wonderful what those frail petted bodies can stand. The fight is going to be a hard one."

She rose with a shiver. "I must go to Cicely——"

The rector of Saint Anne's had called again. Justine, in obedience to Mrs. Gaines's suggestion, had summoned him from Clifton the day after the accident; but, supported by the surgeons and Wyant, she had resisted his admission to the sick-room. Bessy's religious practices had been purely mechanical: her faith had never been associated with the graver moments of her life, and the apparition of a clerical figure at her bedside would portend not consolation but calamity. Since it was all-important that her nervous strength should be sustained, and the gravity of the situation concealed from her, Mrs. Gaines yielded to the medical commands, consoled by the ready acquiescence of the rector. But before she left she extracted a promise that he would call frequently at Lynbrook, and wait his opportunity to say an uplifting word to Mrs. Amherst.

The Reverend Ernest Lynde, who was a young man, with more zeal than experience, deemed it his duty to obey this injunction to the letter; but hitherto he had had to content himself with a talk with the housekeeper, or a brief word on the doorstep from Wyant. Today, however, he had asked somewhat insistently for Miss Brent; and Justine, who was free at the moment, felt that she could not refuse to go down. She had seen him only in the pulpit, when, once

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or twice, in Bessy's absence, she had accompanied Cicely to church: he struck her as a fair grave young man, with a fine voice but halting speech. His sermons were earnest but ineffective.

As he rose to meet her, she felt that she should like him better out of church. His glance was clear and honest, and there was sweetness in his hesitating smile.

"I am sorry to seem persistent—but I heard you had news of Mr. Langhope, and I was anxious to know the particulars," he explained.

Justine replied that her message had overtaken Mr. Langhope at Wady Halfa, and that he hoped to reach Alexandria in time to catch a steamer to Brindisi at the end of the week.

"Not till then? So it will be almost three weeks——?"

"As nearly as I can calculate, a month."

The rector hesitated. "And Mr. Amherst?"

"He is coming back too."

"Ah, you have heard? I'm glad of that. He will be here soon?"

"No. He is in South America—at Buenos Ayres. There will be no steamer for some days, and he may not get here till after Mr. Langhope."

Mr. Lynde looked at her kindly, with grave eyes that proffered help. "This is terrible for you, Miss Brent."

"Yes," Justine answered simply.

"And Mrs. Amherst's condition——?"

"It is about the same."

"The doctors are hopeful?"

"They have not lost hope."

"She seems to keep her strength wonderfully."

"Yes, wonderfully——"

Mr. Lynde paused, looking downward, and awkwardly turning his soft clerical hat in his large kind-looking hands. "One might almost see in it a dispensation—*we* should see one, Miss Brent."

"*We?*" She glanced up apologetically, not quite sure that her tired mind had followed his meaning.

"We, I mean, who believe . . . that not one sparrow falls to the ground. . . ." He flushed, and went on in a more mundane tone: "I am glad you have the hope of Mr. Langhope's arrival to keep you up. Modern science—thank heaven!—can do such wonders in sustaining and prolonging life that, even if there is little chance of recovery, the faint spark may be nursed until. . . ."

He paused again, conscious that the dusky-browed young woman, slenderly erect in her dark blue linen and nurse's cap, was examining him with an intentness which contrasted curiously with the absent-minded glance she had dropped on him in entering.

"In such cases," she said in a low tone, "there is practically no chance of recovery."

"So I understand."

"Even if there were, it would probably be death-in-life; complete paralysis of the lower body."

He shuddered. "A dreadful fate! She was so gay and active——"

"Yes—and the struggle with death, for the next few weeks, must involve incessant suffering . . . frightful suffering . . . perhaps vainly. . . ."

"I feared so," he murmured, his kind face paling.

"Then why do you thank heaven that modern science has found such wonderful ways of prolonging life?"

He raised his head with a start and their eyes met. He saw that the nurse's face was pale and calm—almost judicial in its composure—and his self-possession returned to him.

"As a Christian," he answered, with his rare smile, "I can hardly do otherwise."

Justine continued to consider him thoughtfully. "The men of the older generation—clergymen, I mean," she went on, in a low controlled voice, "would of course take that view—must take it. But the conditions are so changed—so many undreamed-of means of prolonging life—prolonging suffering—have been discovered and applied in the last few years, that I wondered . . . in my profession one often wonders. . . ."

"I understand," he rejoined sympathetically, forgetting his youth and his inexperience in the simple desire to bring solace to a troubled mind. "I understand your feeling—but you need have no doubt. Human life is sacred, and the fact that, even in this materialistic age, science is continually struggling to preserve and prolong it, shows—very beautifully, I think—how all things work together to fulfill the divine will."

"Then you believe that the divine will delights in mere pain—mere meaningless animal suffering—for its own sake?"

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"Surely not; but for the sake of the spiritual life that may be mysteriously wrung out of it."

Justine bent her puzzled brows on him. "I could understand that view of moral suffering—or even of physical pain moderate enough to leave the mind clear, and to call forth qualities of endurance and renunciation. But where the body has been crushed to a pulp, and the mind is no more than a machine for the registering of sense-impressions of physical anguish: of what use can such suffering be to its owner—or to the divine will?"

The young rector looked at her sadly, almost severely. "There, Miss Brent, we touch on inscrutable things, and human reason must leave the answer to faith."

Justine pondered. "So that—one may say—Christianity recognizes no exceptions ——?"

"None—none," its authorized exponent pronounced emphatically.

"Then Christianity and science are agreed." She rose with a sigh, and the young rector, with visible reluctance, stood up also.

"That, again, is one of the most striking evidences ——" he began; and then, as the necessity of taking leave was forced upon him, he added appealingly: "I understand your uncertainties, your questionings, and I wish I could have made my point clearer——"

"Thank you; but it is quite clear. The reasons, of course, are different; but the result is exactly the same."

She held out her hand, smiling sadly upon him, and with a sudden return of youth and self-consciousness, he murmured shyly: "I feel for you"—the man in him yearning over her loneliness, though the pastor dared not press his help. . . .

XXVIII

THAT evening, when Justine took her place at the bedside, and the other two nurses had stolen down to supper, Bessy turned her head slightly, resting her eyes on her friend.

The rose-shaded lamp cast a tint of life on her small wan face, and the dark circles of pain made her eyes look deeper and brighter. Justine was almost deceived by the delusive semblance of vitality, and a hope that was half anguish stirred in her. She sat down by the bed, clasping the hand on the sheet.

"You feel better tonight?"

"I breathe . . . better . . . ." The words came brokenly, between long pauses, but without the hard agonized gasps of the previous night.

"That's a good sign." Justine paused, and then, letting her fingers glide once or twice over the back of Bessy's hand—"You know, dear, Mr. Amherst is coming," she leaned down to say.

Bessy's eyes moved again, slowly, inscrutably. She had never asked for her husband.

"Soon?" she whispered.

"He had started on a long journey—to out-of-the-way places—to study something about cotton growing—my message has just overtaken him," Justine explained.

Bessy lay still, her breast straining painfully for breath. She remained so long without speaking that Justine began to think she was relapsing into the somnolent state that intervened between her moments of complete consciousness. But at length she lifted her lids again, and her lips stirred.

"He will be . . . long . . . coming?"

"Some days."

"How . . . many?"

"We can't tell yet," Justine faltered.

Silence again. Bessy's features seemed to shrink into a kind of waxen quietude—as though her face were seen under clear water, a long way down. And then, as she lay thus, without sound or movement, two tears forced themselves through her lashes and rolled down her cheeks.

Justine, bending close, wiped them away with a consoling murmur. "Bessy——"

The wet lashes were raised—an anguished look met her pitying gaze.

"I—I can't bear it . . . ." Bessy breathed.

"What, dear?"

"The pain. . . . Sha'n't I die . . . sooner?"

"You may get well, Bessy."

Justine felt her hand quiver. "Walk again . . .?"

"Perhaps . . . not that."

"*This*? I can't bear it. . . ." Her head drooped sideways, turning away toward the wall.

Justine, that night, kept her vigil with an aching heart. The news of Amherst's re-

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turn had produced no sign of happiness in his wife—the tears had been forced from her merely by the dread of being kept alive during the long days of pain that must intervene before he came. . . . The medical explanation might have been that repeated crises of intense physical anguish, and the deep lassitude succeeding them, had so overlaid all other feelings, or at least so benumbed their expression, that it was impossible to conjecture how Bessy's little half-smothered spark of soul had really been affected by the news. But Justine did not believe in this argument. Her experience among the sick had convinced her, on the contrary, that the shafts of grief or joy will find a crack in the heaviest armour of physical pain, that the tiniest gleam of hope will light up depths of mental inanition, and somehow send a faint ray to the surface. . . . It was true that Bessy had never known how to bear pain, and that her own sensations had always formed the centre of her universe—yet, for that very reason, if the thought of seeing Amherst had made her happier it would have lifted, at least momentarily, the weight of death from her limbs.

Justine, at first, had almost feared the contrary effect—feared that the moral depression might show itself in a lowering of physical resistance. But the body kept up its obstinate struggle against death, drawing strength from sources of vitality unsuspected in that frail envelope. The surgeon's report the next day was more favourable, and every day won from death pointed now to a faint hope of recovery.

Such at least was Wyant's view. Dr. Garford and the consulting surgeons had not yet declared themselves; but the young doctor, strung to the highest point of watchfulness, and constantly in attendance on the patient, was beginning to tend toward a hopeful prognosis. The growing conviction spurred him to fresh efforts; at Dr. Garford's request, he had temporarily handed over his Clifton practice to a young New York doctor in need of change, and having installed himself at Lynbrook he gave up his days and nights to the study of Mrs. Amherst's case.

"If any one can save her, Wyant will," Dr. Garford had declared to Justine, when, on the tenth day after the accident, the surgeons held their third consultation. Dr. Garford reserved his own judgment. He had seen cases—they had all seen cases . . . but just at present the signs might point either way. . . . Meanwhile Wyant's confidence was an invaluable asset toward the patient's chances of recovery. Hopefulness in the physician was almost as necessary as in the patient—contact with such faith had been known to work miracles. . . .

Justine listened in silence, wishing that she too could hope. But whichever way the prognosis pointed, she felt only a dull despair. She believed no more than Dr. Garford in the chance of recovery—that conviction seemed to her a mirage of Wyant's imagination, of his boyish ambition to achieve the impossible—and every hopeful symptom pointed, in her mind, only to a longer period of useless suffering.

Her hours at Bessy's side deepened her revolt against the energy spent in the fight with death. Since Bessy had learned that her husband was returning she had never, by sign or word, reverted to the fact. Except for a gleam of tenderness, now and then, when Cicely was brought to her, she seemed to have sunk back into herself, as though her poor little flicker of consciousness were wholly centred in the contemplation of its pain. It was not that her mind was clouded—only that it was immersed, absorbed, in that dread mystery of disproportionate anguish which a capricious fate had laid on it. . . . And what if she recovered, as they called it? If the flood-tide of pain should ebb, leaving her stranded, a helpless wreck, high and dry on the desert shores of inactivity? What would life be to Bessy without movement? Thought would never set her blood flowing—motion, in her, could only take the form of the physical processes. Her love for Amherst was dead—even if it flickered into life again, it could only put the spark to smouldering discords and resentments; and would her one uncontaminated sentiment—her affection for Cicely—suffice to reconcile her to the desolate half-life which was the utmost that science could hold out to her?

Here again, Justine's experience answered no. She did not believe in Bessy's powers of moral recuperation—her body seemed less near death than her spirit. Life had been poured out to her in generous measure, and she had spilled the precious draught—the few drops remaining in the cup could no longer renew her strength.

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Pity, not condemnation—profound, illimitable pity—flowed from this conclusion of Justine's. To a compassionate heart there could be no sadder instance of the wastefulness of life than this struggle of the small half-formed soul with a destiny too heavy for its strength. If Bessy had had any moral hope to fight for, every pang of suffering would have been worth enduring; but it was intolerable to witness the spectacle of her useless pain.

Incessant, lonely commerce with such thoughts made Justine, as the days passed, crave any escape from solitude, any contact with other ideas. Even the reappearance of Westy Gaines, bringing a breath of common-place conventional grief into the haunted silence of the house, was a respite from her questionings. If it was hard to talk to him, to answer his enquiries, to assent to his platitudes, it was harder, a thousand times to go on talking to herself. . . .

Mr. Tredegar's coming was a distinct relief. His dryness was like cautery to her wound. Mr. Tredegar undoubtedly grieved for Bessy; but his grief struck inward, exuding only now and then, through the fissures of his hard manner, in a touch of extra solemnity, the more laboured rounding of a period. Yet, on the whole, it was to his feeling that Justine felt her own to be most akin. If his stoic acceptance of the inevitable proceeded from the resolve to spare himself pain, that at least was a form of strength, an indication of character. She had never cared for the fluencies of invertebrate sentiment.

Now, on the evening of the day after her talk with Bessy, it was more than ever a solace to escape from the torment of her thoughts into the rarefied air of Mr. Tredegar's presence. The day had been a bad one for the patient, and Justine's distress had been increased by the receipt of a cable from Mr. Langhope, announcing that, owing to delay in reaching Brindisi, he had missed the fast steamer from Cherbourg, and would not arrive till four or five days later than he had expected. Mr. Tredegar, in response to her report, had announced his intention of coming down by a late train, and now he and Justine and Dr. Wyant, after a brief dinner together, were seated before the fire in the smoking-room.

"I take it, then," Mr. Tredegar said, turning to Wyant, "that the chances of her living to see her father are very slight."

The young doctor raised his head eagerly. "Not in my opinion, sir. Unless unforeseen complications arise, I can almost promise to keep her alive for another month—I'm not afraid to call it six weeks,!"

"H'm—Garford doesn't say so."

"No; Dr. Garford argues from precedent."

"And you?" Mr. Tredegar's thin lips were visited by the ghost of a smile.

"Oh, I don't argue—I just feel my way," said Wyant imperturbably.

"And yet you don't hesitate to predict——"

"No, I don't, sir; because the case, as I see it, presents certain definite indications." He began to enumerate them, cleverly avoiding the use of technicalities and trying to make his point clear by the use of simple illustration and analogy. It sickened Justine to listen to his passionate exposition—she had heard it so often, she believed in it so little.

Mr. Tredegar turned a probing glance upon him as he ended. "Then, today even, you believe not only in the possibility of prolonging life, but of ultimate recovery?"

Wyant hesitated. "I won't call it recovery—today. Say—life indefinitely prolonged."

"And the paralysis?"

"It might disappear—after a few months—or a few years."

"Such an outcome would be unusual?"

"Exceptional. But then there *are* exceptions. And I'm straining every nerve to make this one!"

"And the suffering—such as today's, for instance—is unavoidable?"

"Unhappily."

"And bound to increase?"

"Well—as the anæsthetics lose their effect. . . ."

There was a tap on the door, and one of the nurses entered to report to Wyant. He went out with her, and Justine was left with Mr. Tredegar.

He turned to her thoughtfully. "That young fellow seems sure of himself. You believe in him?"

Justine hesitated. "Not in his expectation of recovery—no one does."

"But you think they can keep the poor child alive till Langhope and her husband get back?"

There was a moment's pause; then Jus-

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tine murmured: "It can be done . . . I think. . . ."

"Yes—it's horrible," said Mr. Tredegar suddenly, as if in answer to her unspoken thought.

She looked up in surprise, and saw his eye resting on her with what seemed like a mist of sympathy on its vitreous surface. Her lips trembled, parting as if for speech—but she looked away without answering.

"These new devices for keeping people alive," Mr. Tredegar continued; "they increase the suffering besides prolonging it?"

"Yes—in some cases."

"In this case?"

"I am afraid so."

The lawyer drew out his fine cambric handkerchief, and furtively wiped a slight dampness from his forehead. "I wish to God she had been killed!" he said.

Justine lifted her head again, with an answering exclamation. "Oh, yes!"

"It's infernal—the time they can make it last," he went on.

"It's useless!" Justine broke out.

"Useless?" He turned his critical glance on her. "Well, that's beside the point—since it's inevitable."

She wavered a moment—but his words had loosened the bonds about her heart, and she could not check herself so suddenly. "Why inevitable?"

Mr. Tredegar looked at her in surprise, as though wondering at so unprofessional an utterance from one who, under ordinary circumstances, showed the absolute self-control and submission of the well-disciplined nurse.

"Human life is sacred," he said sententiously.

"Ah, that must have been decreed by some one who had never suffered!" Justine exclaimed.

Mr. Tredegar smiled compassionately: he evidently knew how to make allowances for the fact that she was overwrought by the sight of her friend's suffering. "Society decreed it—not one person," he corrected.

"Society—science—religion!" she murmured, as if to herself.

"Precisely. It's the universal consensus—the result of the world's accumulated experience. Cruel in individual instances—necessary for the general welfare. Of course your training has taught you all this; but I can understand that at such a time. . . ."

"Yes," she said, rising wearily as Wyant came in.

Her worst misery, now, was to have to discuss Bessy's condition with Wyant. To the young physician Bessy was no longer a suffering, agonizing creature: she was a case—a beautiful case. As the problem developed new intricacies, becoming more and more of a challenge to his faculties of observation and inference, Justine saw the abstract scientific passion supersede his personal emotions of pity. Though his professional skill made him exquisitely tender to the patient under his hands, he seemed hardly conscious that she was a woman who had befriended him, and whom he had so lately seen in the brightness of health and enjoyment. This view was normal enough—it was, as Justine knew, the ideal state of mind for the successful physician, in whom sympathy for the patient as an individual must often impede swift choice and unfaltering action. But what she shrank from was his resolve to save Bessy's life—a resolve fortified to the point of exasperation by the scepticism of the consulting surgeons, who saw in it only the youngster's natural desire to distinguish himself by performing a feat which his elders deemed impossible.

As the days dragged on, and Bessy's sufferings increased, Justine longed in her anguish for a protesting word from Dr. Garford or one of his colleagues. In her hospital experience she had encountered cases where the useless agonies of death were mercifully shortened by the physician; why was not this a case for such treatment? The answer was simple enough—in the first place, it was the duty of the surgeons to keep their patient alive till her husband and her father could reach her; and secondly, there was that faint illusive hope of so-called recovery, in which none of them believed, yet which they could not ignore in their treatment. The evening after Mr. Tredegar's departure Wyant was setting this forth at great length to Justine. Bessy had had a bad morning: the bronchial symptoms which had developed a day or two before had greatly increased her distress, and there had been, at dawn, a moment of weakness when it seemed that some pitiful power was about to defeat the relent-

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less efforts of science. But Wyant had fought off the peril. By the prompt and audacious use of stimulants—by a rapid marshalling of resources, a display of self-reliance and authority, which Justine could not but admire as she mechanically seconded his efforts—the spark of life had been revived, and Bessy won back for fresh suffering.

"Yes—I say it can be done: tonight I say it more than ever," Wyant exclaimed, pushing the disordered hair from his forehead, and leaning toward Justine across the table on which their brief evening meal had been served. "I say the way the heart has rallied proves that we've got more strength to draw on than any of them have been willing to admit. The breathing's better too. If we can fight off the degenerative processes—and, by George, I believe we can!" He looked up suddenly at Justine. "With you to work with, I believe I could do anything. How you do back a man up! You think with your hands—with every individual finger!"

Justine turned her eyes away: she felt a shudder of repulsion steal over her tired body. It was not that she detected any note of personal admiration in his praise—he had commended her as the surgeon might commend a fine instrument fashioned for his use. But that she should be the instrument to serve such a purpose—that her skill, her promptness, her gift of divining and interpreting the will she worked with, should be at the service of this implacable scientific passion! Ah, no—it was unendurable—she could be silent no longer. . . .

She looked up at Wyant, and their eyes met.

"Why do you do it?" she asked.

He stared, as if thinking that she referred to some special point in his treatment. "Do what?"

"It's all so useless . . . you all know she must die."

"I know nothing of the kind . . . and even the others are not so sure today." He began to go over it all again—repeating his arguments, developing new theories, trying to force into her reluctant mind his own faith in the possibility of success.

Justine sat resting her chin on her clasped hands, her eyes gazing straight before her under dark tormented brows. When he paused for a reply she remained silent.

"Well—don't you believe me?" he broke out with sudden asperity.

"I don't know. . . . I can't tell. . . ."

"But as long as there's a doubt, even—a doubt my way—and I'll show you there is, if you'll give me time——"

"How much time?" she murmured, without shifting her gaze.

"Ah—that depends on ourselves: on you and me chiefly. That's what Garford admits. *They* can't do much now—they've got to leave the game to us. It's a question of incessant vigilance . . . of utilizing every hour, every moment. . . . Time's all I ask, and *you* can give it to me, if any one can!"

Under the challenge of his tone Justine rose to her feet with a low murmur of fear. "Ah, don't ask me!"

"Don't ask you——?"

"I can't—I can't!"

Wyant stood up also, turning on her an astonished glance.

"You can't—what?" he asked.

Their eyes met, and she thought she read in his a sudden discernment of her inmost thoughts. The discovery electrified her flagging strength, restoring her to immediate clearness of brain. She saw the gulf of self-betrayal over which she had hung, and the nearness of the peril nerved her to a last effort of dissimulation.

"I can't—talk of it . . . any longer," she faltered, letting her tears flow, and turning on him a face of pure womanly weakness.

Wyant looked at her for a moment without answering. Did he distrust even these plain physical evidences of exhaustion, or was he merely disappointed in her, as in one whom he had believed to be above the emotional failings of her sex?

"You're over-tired," he said coldly. "Take tonight to rest. Miss Mace can replace you for the next few hours—and I may need you more tomorrow."

XXIX

FOUR more days had passed. Bessy seldom spoke when Justine was with her. She was wrapped in a thickening cloud of opiates—morphia by day, bromides, sulphonal, chloral hydrate at night. When the cloud broke and consciousness emerged, it was centred in the one acute point of bodily anguish. Darting throes of neuralgia, ago-

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nized oppression of the breath, the diffused misery of the whole helpless body—these were reducing their victim to a mere instrument on which pain played its incessant deadly variations. Once or twice she turned her dull eyes on Justine, breathing out: "I want to die," as some inevitable lifting or readjusting thrilled her body with fresh pangs; but there were no signs of contact with the outer world—she had ceased even to ask for Cicely. . . .

And yet, according to the doctors, the patient held her own. Certain alarming symptoms had diminished, and while others persisted, the strength to combat them persisted too. With such strength to call on, what fresh agonies were reserved for the poor body when narcotics had lost their power over it?

That was the question always before Justine. She never again betrayed her fears to Wyant—she carried out his orders with morbid precision, trembling lest any failure in efficiency should revive his suspicions. She hardly knew what she feared his suspecting—she only had a confused sense that they were enemies, and that she was the weaker of the two.

And then the anæsthetics began to fail. It was the sixteenth day since the accident, and the resources of alleviation were almost exhausted. It was not sure, even now, that Bessy was going to die—and she was certainly going to suffer a long time. Wyant seemed hardly conscious of the increase of pain—his whole mind was fixed on the prognosis. What matter if the patient suffered, as long as he proved his case? That, of course, was not his way of putting it. In reality he did all he could to allay the pain, surpassed himself in new devices and experiments. But death confronted him implacably, claiming his due: so many hours robbed from him, so much tribute to pay; and Wyant, setting his teeth, fought on—and Bessy paid.

Justine had begun to notice that it was hard for her to get a word alone with Dr. Garford. The other nurses were not in the way—it was Wyant who always contrived to be there. Perhaps she was unreasonable in seeing a special intention in his presence: it was natural enough that the two persons in charge of the case should confer together with their chief. But his persistence annoyed her, and she was glad when, one afternoon, the surgeon asked him to telephone an important message to town.

As soon as the door had closed, Justine said to Dr. Garford: "She is beginning to suffer terribly."

He answered with the large impersonal gesture of the man to whom physical suffering has become a painful general fact of life, no longer divisible into individual cases. "We are doing all we can."

"Yes." She paused, and then raised her eyes to his dry kind face. "Is there any hope?"

Another gesture—the fatalistic sweep of the lifted palms. "The next ten days will tell—the fight is on, as Wyant says. And if any one can do it, that young fellow can. There's stuff in him—and infernal ambition."

"Yes: but do *you* believe she can live——?"

Dr. Garford smiled indulgently on such unprofessional insistence; but she was past wondering what they must all think of her.

"My dear Miss Brent," he said, "I have reached the age when one always leaves a door open to the unexpected."

As he spoke, a slight sound at her back made her turn. Wyant was behind her—he must have entered the room as she put her question. And he certainly could not have had time to descend the stairs, walk the length of the house, ring up New York, and deliver Dr. Garford's message. . . . The same thought seemed to strike the surgeon. "Hallo, Wyant?" he said.

"Line busy," said Wyant curtly.

About this time, Justine gave up her night vigils. She could no longer face the struggle of the dawn hour, when life ebbs lowest; and since her duties extended beyond the sick-room she could fairly plead that she was more needed about the house by day. But Wyant protested: he wanted her most at the difficult hour.

"You know you're taking a chance from her," he said, almost sternly.

"Oh, no——"

He looked at her searchingly. "You don't feel up to it?"

"No."

He turned away with a slight shrug; but she knew he resented her defection.

The day watches were miserable enough.

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It was the nineteenth day now; and Justine lay on the sofa in Amherst's sitting-room, trying to nerve herself for the nurse's summons. A page torn out of a calendar lay before her—she had been calculating again how many days must elapse before Mr. Langhope could arrive. Ten days—ten days and ten nights! And the length of the nights was double. . . . As for Amherst, it was impossible to set a date for his coming, for his steamer from Buenos Ayres called at various ports on the way northward, and the length of her stay at each was dependent on the delivery of freight, and on the dilatoriness of the South American official.

She threw down the calendar and leaned back, pressing her hands to her aching temples. Oh, for a word with Amherst—he alone would have understood what she was undergoing! Mr. Langhope's coming would make no difference—or rather, it would only increase the difficulty of the situation. Instinctively Justine felt that, though his heart would be wrung by the sight of Bessy's pain, his cry would be the familiar one, the traditional one: *Keep her alive!* Under his surface originality, his verbal audacities and ironies, Mr. Langhope was the creature of accepted forms, inherited opinions: he had never really thought for himself on any of the pressing problems of life.

But Amherst was different. Close contact with many forms of wretchedness had freed him from the bondage of accepted opinion. He looked at life through no eyes but his own; and what he saw, he confessed to seeing. He never tried to evade the consequences of his discoveries.

Justine's remembrance flew back to their first meeting at Hanaford, when his confidence in his own powers was still unshaken, his trust in others unimpaired. And, gradually, she began to relive each detail of their talk at Dillon's bedside—her first impression of him, as he walked down the ward; the first sound of his voice; her surprised sense of his authority; her almost involuntary submission to his will. . . . Then her thoughts passed on to their walk home from the hospital—she recalled his sober yet unsparing summary of the situation at Westmore, and the note of insight with which he touched on the hardships of the workers. . . . Then, word by word, their talk about Dillon came back . . . his indignation and pity . . . his shudder of revolt at the man's doom. . . .

"*In your work, don't you ever feel tempted to set a poor devil free?*" And then, after her conventional murmur of protest: "*To save what, when all the good of life is gone?*"

To distract her thoughts she stretched her hand toward the book-case, taking out the first volume in reach—the little copy of Bacon. She leaned back, fluttering its pages aimlessly—so wrapped in her own misery that the meaning of the words could not reach her. It was useless to try to read: every perception of the outer world was lost in the hum of inner activity that made her mind like a forge throbbing with heat and noise. But suddenly her glance fell on some pencilled sentences on the fly-leaf. They were in Amherst's hand, and the sight arrested her thoughts as though she had heard him speak.

La vraie morale se moque de la morale. . . .

We perish because we follow other men's examples. . . . Socrates used to call the opinions of the many by the name of Lamiæ—bugbears to frighten children. . . .

A rush of air seemed to have been let into her stifled mind. Were they his own thoughts? No—her memory recalled some confused association with great names. But at least they must represent his beliefs—must embody deeply-felt convictions—or he would scarcely have taken the trouble to record them.

She murmured over the last sentence once or twice: *The opinions of the many—bugbears to frighten children. . . .* Yes, she had often heard him speak of current judgments in that way . . . she had never known a mind so free from the spell of the Lamiæ. . . .

Some one knocked, and she put aside the book and rose to her feet. It was a maid bringing a note from Wyant.

"There has been a motor accident beyond Clifton, and I have been sent for. I think I can safely be away for two or three hours, but ring me up at Clifton if you want me. Miss Mace has instructions, and Garford's assistant will be down at seven."

She looked at the clock: it was just three, the hour at which she was to relieve Miss Mace. She smoothed her hair from her forehead, straightened her cap, tied on the apron she had laid aside. . . .

As she entered Bessy's sitting-room the nurse came out, memoranda in hand. The

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two moved to the window for a moment's conference, and as the wintry light fell on Miss Mace's face, Justine saw that it was livid with fatigue.

"You're ill!" she exclaimed.

The nurse shook her head. "No—but it's awful . . . this afternoon. . . ." Her glance turned to the door of the sick-room.

"Go and rest—I'll stay till bedtime," Justine said.

"Miss Safford's down with another headache."

"I know: it doesn't matter. I'm quite fresh."

"You *do* look rested!" the other exclaimed, her eyes lingering enviously on Justine's face.

She stole heavily away, and Justine entered the room. It was true that she felt fresh—a new spring of hope had welled up in her. She had her nerves in hand again, she had regained her steady vision of life. . . .

But in the room, as the nurse had whispered, it was awful. The time had come when the effect of the anæsthetics must be carefully husbanded, when long intervals of pain must purchase the diminishing moments of relief. Yet from Wyant's standpoint it was a good day—things were looking well, as he would have phrased it. And each day now was a fresh victory. . . .

Justine went through her task mechanically. The glow of strength and courage remained, steeling her to bear what had broken down Miss Mace's professional fortitude. But when she sat down by the bed, Bessy's moaning began to wear on her. It was no longer the utterance of human pain, but the monotonous whimper of an animal—the kind of sound that a compassionate hand would instinctively crush into silence. But her hand had other duties; she must keep watch on pulse and heart, must reinforce their action with the tremendous stimulants which Wyant was now using, and, having revived fresh sensibility to pain, must presently try to allay it by the cautious use of narcotics.

It was all simple enough—but suppose she should not do it? Suppose she left the stimulants untouched? . . . Wyant was absent, one nurse exhausted with fatigue, the other laid low by headache. Justine had the field to herself. For three hours at least no one was likely to cross the threshold of the sick-room. . . . Ah, if no more time were needed! But there was too much life in Bessy—her youth was fighting too hard for her! She would not sink out of life in three hours . . . and Justine could not count on more than that.

She looked at the little travelling-clock on the dressing-table, and saw that its hands marked four. An hour had passed already. . . . . She rose, and administered the prescribed restorative; then she took the pulse, and listened to the beat of the heart. Strong still—too strong!

As she lifted her head, the vague animal wailing ceased, and she heard her name: "Justine——"

She bent down eagerly. "Yes?"

No answer: the wailing had begun again. But the one word showed her that the mind still lived in its torture-house, that the poor powerless body before her was not yet a mere bundle of senseless reflexes, but her friend Bessy Amherst, dying, and feeling herself die. . . .

She reseated herself, and the vigil began again. The second hour ebbed slowly—ah, no, it was flying now! Her eyes were on the hands of the clock, and they seemed leagued against her to devour the precious minutes. And now she could see by certain spasmodic symptoms that another crisis of pain was approaching—one of the struggles that Wyant, at times, had almost seemed to court and exult in. . . .

Bessy's eyes turned on her again. "*Justine*——"

She knew what that meant: it was an appeal for the hypodermic needle. The little instrument lay at hand, beside a newly-filled bottle of morphia. But she must wait—must let the pain grow more severe. Yet she could not turn her gaze from Bessy, and Bessy's eyes entreated her again—*Justine!* There was really no word now—the whimperings were uninterrupted. But Justine heard an inner voice, and its pleading shook her heart. She rose and filled the syringe—and returning with it, bent above the bed. . . .

She lifted her head and looked at the clock. The second hour had passed. As she looked, she heard a step in the sitting-room. Who could it be? Not Dr. Garford's assistant—he was not due till seven. She listened again. . . . One of the nurses? No, it was not a woman's step——

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The door opened, and Wyant came in. She stood by the bed without moving toward him. He paused also, as if surprised to see her there motionless. In the intense silence, she fancied for a moment that she heard Bessy's violent, agonized breathing. She tried to speak, to drown the sound of the breathing; but her lips trembled too much, and she remained silent.

Wyant seemed to hear nothing. He stood so still that she felt she must move forward. As she did so, she picked up from the table by the bed the memoranda that it was her duty to submit to him.

"Well?" he said, in the familiar sick-room whisper.

"She is dead."

He fell back a step, glaring at her, white and incredulous.

"*Dead?*— When——?"

"A few minutes ago. . . ."

"*Dead*—? It's not possible!"

He swept past her, shouldering her aside, pushing in an electric button as he sprang to the bed. She realized then that the room had been almost in darkness. She recovered command of herself, and followed him. He was going through the usual rapid examination—pulse, heart, breath—hanging over the bed like some angry animal balked of its prey. Then he lifted the lids and bent close above the eyes.

"Take the shade off that lamp!" he commanded.

Justine obeyed him.

He stooped down again to examine the eyes . . . he remained stooping a long time. Suddenly he stood up and faced her.

"Had she been in great pain?"

"Yes."

"Worse than usual?"

"Yes."

"What had you done?"

"Nothing—there was no time."

"No time?" He broke off to sweep the room again with his excited glance. "Where are the others? Why were you here alone?" he demanded.

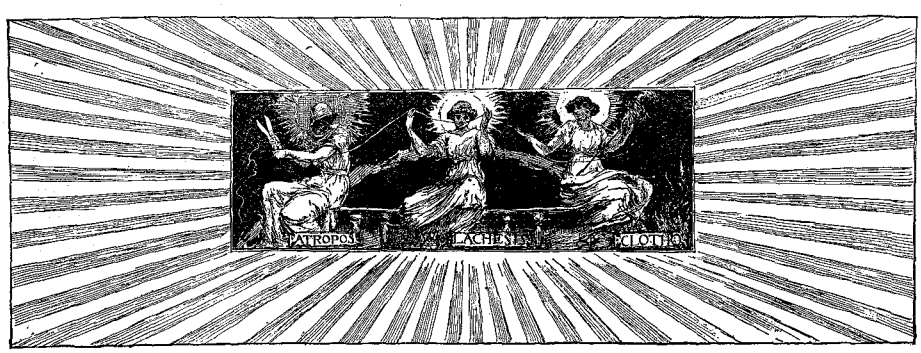
"It came suddenly. I was going to call——"

Their eyes met for a moment. Her face was perfectly calm—she could feel that her lips no longer trembled. She was not in the least afraid of Wyant's scrutiny.

As he continued to look at her, his expression slowly passed from incredulous wrath to something softer—more human—she could not tell what. . . .

"This has been too much for you—go and send one of the others. . . . It's all over," he said.

(To be continued.)



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THE GRANDFATHERS OF THE EVOLUTION

By Nelson Lloyd

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

THE retirement of Jared Blake from the gay world in which he had been so long a conspicuous figure was, at the time, a subject of much comment and speculation. That a man of his large means, of his position socially, and, moreover, a bachelor, should suddenly close his house, disappear from his clubs and from the smart circle in which he was a favorite, rent his opera box, sell his stable--in fact, give up all those pleasures for which men most strive, renounce them to begin the study of medicine and take to politics and philanthropy—was undoubtedly strange. Some of his friends even went so far as to hint that his mind was affected, that an hereditary taint of the Van Eycks, of which that ancient family was rather proud, had in him assumed a more pronounced form, and among his relatives there was not a little talk of legal steps to prevent him from dissipating his fortune in charity. It appeared, however, to the eminent counsel whom they consulted that it would be difficult to have a man adjudged insane because he was giving away nearly one million dollars annually, when in return he could show that while devoting his entire income to homes and hospitals he had been steadily increasing his capital by clever investment; or, further, to convince the courts that he was incompetent to control his own affairs because time formerly spent in dining and dancing was given to the study of human ills and their alleviation. That Blake was eccentric, if not mad, was the general verdict of his friends. For myself I love the new Blake. I liked the old—but liked only. I knew the epicure, the *raconteur*, the genial spendthrift. I know the student, the politician, the philanthropist. And what wrought the change is not a mystery to me. He told me everything that night when I came upon him standing in the *débris* of his strange midnight feast; standing, too, in the *débris* of his past, erect, his shoulders square, his face grimly set in a new determination. At first I scoffed. Then came his resignation from the Colonial Lords, that most exclusive of all our societies given to ancestor worship. It had been his hobby for years and such a desertion brought forth my most forceful remonstrances. I even hinted my darkest suspicions. "Mad?" he cried. "Because I refuse to worship a crew like that—mad?" And he laughed so uproariously yet so sanely that I began to believe. He believes. He proves it every day, but when I see him I marvel more at the result than at the cause.

Jared Blake, then, had ancestors as well as money. He inherited them from his mother, a Van Eyck whose family tree spread its branches into ten of the original thirteen colonies. His fortune, his constitution, and, remembering that good woman, I should add his looks, came from his father's side. The Blake tree was a shorn trunk, all its branches having long since been blown away on the winds of adversity. But Jared could spare them. His mother had bequeathed him a large collection of portraits, and strolling around his library he could look into the solemn faces of many of his forefathers. In certain of these he had particular pleasure, for through them he had qualified for the Colonial Lords, and he never tired of extolling them and giving their history to his guests.

"Yonder, over the fireplace," he would say, "is my great-great-grandfather, Paul Van Eyck, who was twice speaker of the provincial assembly, a very well-known man of the time. The third to the right is Captain Peter Windom, of Massachusetts, commander of the famous privateer *Sparhawk*, a gallant sailor. Beside him is Harry Hurlingham, of the Virginia Hurlinghams, you know—served as aide to Mad Anthony Wayne; and the benign old Quaker is Thomas Williams, a Philadelphia merchant—fine face, has he not?"

These, then, were the four great-great-grandfathers of Jared Blake. True, he should have had eight, but four was all he

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knew, and surely four were enough for any man. And if he ever had any longing for a complete set it could not have outlived that midnight supper, that strange time—— But there, I am getting ahead too fast again. Facts should be arranged in proper sequence, truth as well as fiction.

The supper was for the governors of the Colonial Lords. It was to be a quiet little affair at which we should discuss the coming dinner of the society, decide who should speak and who should not, and what we were to eat and drink. As president, Blake was our host. Indeed, because he had been our host for so many years we kept him in the chair, as his little midnight feasts were more enjoyable by far than the formal dinner, for we were rare cronies, and quickly passed from the discussion of speakers and guests to more interesting subjects, like terrapin and wine.

Jared Blake's terrapin! How my outer man smiles and my inner man frowns at the very thought of it! Never was its like. For this particular occasion he had composed a new sauce, a poem of wines and spices, which he warned us would be ready at twelve, and who delayed past the stroke of the hour did so at his own cost. He knew us. He knew that at eleven we should appear no matter how alluring the last bars of the opera or the bridge room at the club. So at eleven he descended the stairs, took a turn of the dining-room to see the final touches of the table, and settled himself in a deep chair in the library. Comfortable, by a blazing fire, gazing up into the expressionless face of Paul Van Eyck, he did not realize what was going on without. The wind in the chimney might have suggested it, but he gave it no heed, and the curtains were drawn so that he could not see the snow falling so heavily as to make the streets almost impassable. It was for Hopkins, the butler, to apprise him of the blizzard that raged. There had just been a call from the Gotham Club, a message from Mr. Ames, but before he could take it the wire had broken down. Blake went to the window, and after one glance at the storm gave orders to delay the terrapin, for it was now nearly midnight and not a guest had appeared. He became worried, pacing restlessly up and down the library, each minute adding to his impatience. At last, to calm his unsettled nerves, he turned to the dining-room and had a glass of Scotch and soda. But mark this—he drank but one, and that a scant two fingers of the liquid that exhilarates but does not inebriate if taken in sufficiently small quantities. I mention this to show that his innocent diversion was in no way the cause of the events that followed. They followed fast. Hardly had he returned to the library when from the drawing-room solemnly, formally, rang the voice of Hopkins.

"Mr. Paul Van Eyck."

Blake started, halted, and stared. He started at the name; he halted, hearing the light footfalls approaching through the adjoining room; he stared when he saw his guest. Framed in the *portières* was his great-great-grandfather! Real? Nonsense! It was but some quaint conceit of Ames or Harding to masquerade this way. To the portrait above the mantel went his glance; then back to the man. That one was a copy of the other there could be no doubt. Each wore a coat of black velvet with wide-spreading tails and lace ruffles at the sleeves, black breeches, and stockings of white silk. Their long waistcoats were alike to the pattern of the embroidery, and so with the hair, curled and powdered, and caught behind in a cue. The copy was faithful to the very fall of the neckcloth and the silver knee-buckles. But in this there was nothing uncanny. It was the faces that made Blake shake himself as though he would break from enmeshing dreams. For the face of the man was the face of the portrait, even to the hook of the nose; it was the face of the portrait come to life; the ruddy red of health shot over the cheeks, as the mouth curled in a smile, and the eyes were alight with humor.

"Good evening, Jared," he said, coming forward. Drawing from his pocket a snuff-box, he snapped open the lid and proffered it politely, to meet a gesture of refusal. Undisturbed by the coldness of the greeting, he took a pinch himself; then inquired in a pleasant voice, "Have the others come?"

To him, anyway, there was nothing out of the ordinary occurring, and his easy self-assurance revived Blake's oozing courage. Blake was really a man of courage. Bracing himself, he gave the problem a quick turn in his mind. If he were dreaming he had nothing to fear. If he were awake, he was alone a match for this slender old gentleman, and did he need aid a dozen servants

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were within call. A hand was outstretched to him, and he could hesitate no longer, and meeting it found it as solid flesh as his own. Had he any doubts that friendly grasp swept them away. He rapped his head with clenched fist; he beat his chest; he rubbed his eyes. He was awake—wide, wide awake! And this was Paul Van Eyck! Surely time had turned and tumbled him into a past century.

"Grandfather!" he faltered.

"Have the others come?" repeated the old gentleman.

"Who?" Blake asked, regaining somewhat of his composure.

"The Grandfathers of the Evolution," was the grave reply.

"I do not understand," returned Jared, this puzzling question driving from his mind for the moment the great mystery. "What do you mean by the Evolution, sir?"

"Why you, my dear boy," answered Mr. Van Eyck, kindly. "You are the Evolution. Surely you knew we were coming here to-night to have a little celebration in your honor. You seemed to expect me. My, but it is good to see you! And so prosperous!" He slapped his descendant heartily on the shoulder.

Blake gasped. "Do you mean to say——"

"I mean to say that we are proud of you, Jared." There was no trace of sarcasm either in face or voice. Mr. Van Eyck raised his hand and drew his descendant's gaze to the broad lapel of his coat. "You may be interested in our badge—the ribbon, blue—true blue, you know, emblematic—and the head you recognize, of course."

Leaning forward, Blake studied the medallion, and was astounded to see stamped there his own likeness. The top-hat and rather high collar looked strangely out of place in bronze, but more curious still was the motto beneath the head.

"He is a gentleman," he read aloud in a voice that quavered. A thoughtful silence followed. There was a smile on his face when he looked up at his ancestor. "Am I?" he asked quietly.

"Of course." Mr. Van Eyck seemed to believe there could be no doubt about it whatever. "Otherwise, we should hardly be foolish enough to have a society devoted to talking about you—dinners and speeches and all that kind of thing. But what can be the matter with Windom and Hurlingham and—— Ah!"

The voice of Hopkins stopped him. Through the drawing-room it rang pompously, announcing "Mr. Thomas Williams."

A solemn figure appeared. Blake shuddered, not at the weirdness of his situation, but at the aspect of the new guest. Mr. Williams bore no resemblance to his portrait save in the sombre garb, all dark gray, even to the stockings. The cut of the coat, the broad-brimmed black hat, the straight hair chopped off at the shoulders, marked him a Quaker, but there was nothing of the benign in the beady eyes looking out from a face all circled with deep wrinkles. In the portrait he seemed severe, but pious and ready to murmur, "Peace" with sweet suavity. In the flesh he halted with soldierly precision, raised his hand, and in an acid tone cried: "Peace, my son; I wish thee all good."

Blake, though doubting his sincerity, returned the greeting with proper meekness: "Peace, grandfather, and welcome."

"My apologies for lateness," Mr. Williams went on. "Thee will understand—I sought to save a few shillings by walking instead of taking a public conveyance. A shilling saved is——" His portrait had caught his glance, and as he gazed at it in silence his face wrinkled deeper in an approving smile. "Thou flatterest me, Jared," he cried.

Now Blake was a man of some wit. As an accomplished after-dinner speaker he was much sought by the sons of various revolutions and had sharpened his tongue in many a tilt. Marvelling still at the strangeness of his company, he was meeting the situation with *aplomb*. In this he had been helped by the distinguished appearance and manners of Mr. Van Eyck. He was decidedly proud of him. But to counterbalance the first pleasant impression of his ancestors came this repelling figure to irritate him.

"I am sorry, grandfather," he returned in his blandest tone. "It was done from a silhouette and the artist had to imagine much. His imagination seems to have missed."

Mr. Van Eyck, in the act of taking snuff, gasped at this temerity on Jared's part and drew the powder into his throat. He began to choke violently and fell to beating his

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chest with his hands. Dignity disappeared in the struggle between merriment and agony. Such levity added fuel to the fire in the face of Mr. Williams, and he turned from his descendant to glare at his contemporary.

"Impudence," he snapped. "I tell thee, Friend Paul——"

A sound of scuffling in the hall cut short this outbreak. There was a shuffle of feet in the drawing-room; a hoarse voice carolled a few bars of a ribald song; a crash of furniture was followed by a muffled oath and silence.

"Mr. Hurlingham," cried Hopkins. He had lifted the guest to his feet and pointed him toward the library. This done, he seemed to think his duty ended and stepped away, leaving the Virginian to come lurching on. He made a wide *détour* and brought up against a high-backed chair. Finding such solid support, he laid fast hold of it, and stood leering contentedly at the other three.

Sober and clean, Mr. Hurlingham would have been a handsome man. In a dark-blue coat and claret-colored waistcoat, with breeches and stockings of white silk, he should have made the gallant figure of the portrait on the wall. But his clothes were sadly faded and stained; linen and lace were soiled and torn; his neckcloth was twisted and his wig askew; even the century had not aired him out. Sober and clean, in his courtly garb, with a sword to tip up the broad tails of his coat and a cocked hat to swing gracefully as he moved, he would have been an ancestor to boast of. But Blake saw an unkempt toper. He wanted to laugh—to laugh long and loud at himself and all his family. So this was Harry Hurlingham, one of the fairest flowers on his family tree, Hurlingham, of Virginia, the dashing soldier, the hero of a dozen duels—this besotted creature! As he quietly eyed the latest guest his face grew hard. Disappointment was written there, and reading it, Paul Van Eyck laid a kindly hand on his shoulder.

"Cheer up, Jared," he said. "Harry is at heart a fine fellow. He died in his cups, to be sure, but many a good man has had the same end. Remember, too, that of us all he was the only gentleman born."

"Gentleman—disgusting," cried Mr. Williams, pointing a condemning finger at the rake. "Friend Harry, thy conduct is most unseemly, but I pray that the good Lord will not deal more harshly with thee than is necessary."

The Virginian's retort was a drunken laugh. "Has the soshiety—I mean the shos—the shos——" He became lost in the mazes of the word, broke again into his maudlin song, and collapsed into the chair.

Mr. Van Eyck, starting to the toper's aid, halted and turned to the entrance.

"Ah! at last the Captain," he exclaimed.

A harsh voice of command rang through the drawing-room. "Get away, you mutinous lackey. I need no introduction to my own great-great-grandson."

The protests of Hopkins, though obsequious, were loud, but he was brought to silence by a feigned blow and an oath.

"The Captain is in fine feather to-night," said Mr. Van Eyck, addressing no one in particular, and looking up at the ceiling as though to hide the vague smile that flitted over his face.

"What—you here, you double-faced politician?" There was no doubting the sailor's mood. It was pugnacious. He did not trouble even to remove his hat, but stood between the *portières*, erect, arms folded, a picture of contempt, ill-mannered, yet a fine figure of a seaman.

The portrait showed him a dandy, with hair carefully dressed and powdered, and clad in a blue uniform slashed with red, which was a marvel of fit and neatness. The man was a fighter. His hair, unpowdered, was gathered behind in a loose knot; his face was purple from the salt winds and grog, and a great scar split his cheek from ear to chin. The pistols and sword slung from his loose sash, and the heavy sea-boots were in perfect accord with the ferocity of his countenance and address. He would never have said, "Gentlemen of the Guard, fire first."

Evidently the effect of his entrance pleased him. The smile fled the face of Paul Van Eyck and he began to rub his hands together apologetically. Mr. Williams was edging toward the distant end of the room. Blake alone seemed unperturbed, for he was now prepared for anything that the past might produce, and returned the sailor's gaze with one as contemptuous. This boldness softened the Captain a trifle, and when he spoke again his voice had a pleasanter note.

"Pardon me, Jared, but it is hard to

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"Thou flatterest me, Jared," he cried.—Page 219.

leave a comfortable berth on such a night, and I am a plain-speaking man and care little for company like this. Harry Hurlingham as usual—always a weak-kneed man with a bottle. Ah! and yonder is old Friend Sourphiz. Don't trouble, Thomas, to place the table between us, for though you did your best to have me hanged I'll have no quarrel with you in the house of our honored descendant."

Mr. Williams made a poor show of courage. "Dost thou come as a pirate, Friend Windom, or as an officer in the navy of Congress?" he asked in a trembling voice.

"Peace unto thee," was the mocking answer. "That ship of yours that I took

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would have met a worse fate in other hands, and surely I treated the crew kindly. But it was no fault of yours that I escaped the gallows and lived to serve my country. Peace, old miser. And as for you, Jared, to improve our manners with supper. Harry, suppose you and I lead."

The Virginian made no protest, and allowed the kindly Dutchman to lift him to his feet and support him to the dining-

He was brought to silence by a feigned blow and an oath.—Page 220.

a little rum would warm my breast toward you most amazingly."

"Yes, peace—in heaven's name, peace," cried Paul Van Eyck. "Remember our descendant is a gentleman and not accustomed to our unseemly ways, We have made a bad beginning in his house. Now let us try

room. Blake followed with the Quaker on his arm, casting, as they went, many nervous glances over shoulder at the Captain, who swaggered behind.

The servants were standing woodenly behind their chairs. It might be thought that at the entrance of such a company they

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Drawn by James Montgomery Flagg.

Stood leering contentedly at the other three.—Page 220.

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had good right to be suspicious, if not absolutely frightened, but they remembered the master's fondness for masquerade, his famous costume ball of the year before, and his wardrobe crammed with the strange uniforms of many societies. That they mistook his ancestors for his friends was a reflection on our former conduct in his house that it is well to pass by lightly. Whatever was in their minds, they gave no evidence of

In this perilous position he remained suspended and forgotten.—Page 226.

it, no suggestion that to them anything unusual was occurring, and as became men trained by the admirable Mr. Hopkins, they fell to their task of serving. But what of the host to this strange company? In that preprandial hush, when the guests were getting the range of their plates and adjusting their sights, tucking their napkins under their chins and figuring the bacchanalian possibilities from their glasses, he had the first opportunity to ponder over the strangeness of his case. In those moments when events crowd quickly on us we act on impulse. So with Blake. Every passing minute had brought a new figure from the past, and he could only accept them for what they were —dead men come to life—and as living men he had received them. Here was a miracle. But when a man, dead a hundred years, appears before you in the flesh, when he comes, as would any guest, properly announced by the butler, with his hand outstretched, you will welcome him first and marvel next. Now Blake was marvelling. From the head of the table, bolt upright in his chair, he stared from guest to guest. Dead though these men had been, they were alive. Quickened they might be for this one night; and Paul Van Eyck could speak about the weather and Thomas Williams hem and haw in answer; Peter Windom could count his forks and glasses in greedy calculation, and Hurlingham groan humanly—real they might be, real and nat-

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Drawn by James Montgomery Flagg.

"Harry, suppose you and I lead."—Page 222.

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ural, yet all was wrong! They had not come from their graves to harm him. Jared was sure of that. But his blood swung through him in icy currents. He must cry out in protest, in horror. This were easy to do, did he sit in a company of ghouls; at a

"Gentlemen, pardon me."—Page 229.

well-ordered table, with these men strangely garbed but strangely human, with his own servants filling their glasses, he could not. He could only lurch back in his chair and gape at the pirate on his left.

The Captain, sipping his sherry, did not notice the curious conduct of his host. But Mr. Williams did, and cried out in alarm: "Friend, thou art ill."

Windom turned his glass from his own lips to Jared's. "Quick, boy," he exclaimed. "A swallow of wine."

"It is nothing," said Blake, refusing the proffered aid. "Pardon me if I was absent-minded. I was thinking." His blood ran warm again and he sat erect, bolt upright, with shoulders squared, speaking with steady voice. "Grandfathers, your coming was a surprise and I was not altogether prepared, but you are welcome. I hope the supper will be to your liking."

The supper was to their liking. Never had Blake's kitchen produced a better. The grapefruit dashed with old Madeira was new to the guests, and they were soon smacking their lips over it with rare and noisy relish. At the sight of the Lynnhaven oysters, fattened to the hour, a smile fastened itself on the face of Friend Williams. At the first taste of the terrapin the purple countenance of Captain Windom began to glow.

"Peace unto thee, dear Thomas," he said, raising his glass of champagne and beaming on his old foe. "Let us forget that little matter of brig and cargo and remember only that we are co-ancestors of Jared Blake."

Mr. Williams cackled joyously. "Thou shouldst have been hanged, Peter," he returned, "but I forgive thee for our descendant's sake. I shall even break my rule to touch not the cup that biteth like an adder, so kindly disposed do I feel toward thee." With that he turned up his face in ecstasy and drained his glass to the bottom.

Mr. Hurlingham began to cheer, but the effort unsettled him and he slipped down in his chair, only his elbows catching on the oak arms preventing him from coasting under the table. In this perilous position he remained suspended and forgotten, for Mr. Van Eyck had arisen to propose a toast.

The smart attire, the courtly manners, and the kindly disposition of this old New Yorker were as balm to the wounded pride of Jared Blake. Here, at least, said he to himself, was one great-great-grandfather whom he could present to any of his friends. So for the moment he forgot the others, the boorish pirate, the tattered rake, the grim-visaged Quaker, and turned a smiling face

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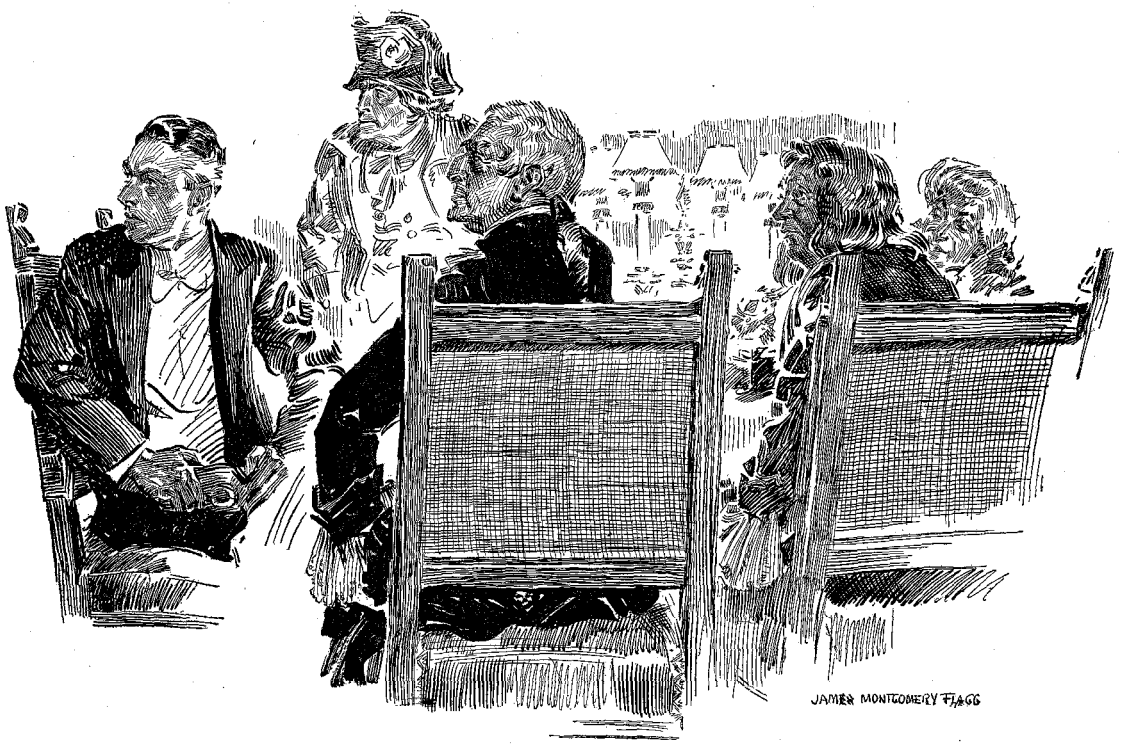
to the speaker. Mr. Van Eyck had the ease of one accustomed to postprandial oratory. He began with a gentle gesture of protest as though the task to which he was set were far from his liking.

"I find that I am on the programme to speak on our descendant. To talk on such a subject cannot but be a pleasure to one who is a self-made man. I am a self-made man." He drew himself up and gazed sternly at his hearers, as though to let that fact sink deeply into their hearts. And it did sink

highly respectable wig-maker of Whitehall Street. So, if after a century I confess that my life was not altogether what it should have been, you will understand and excuse, for remember I began with nothing. I had to make my own way in the world and took to politics, and in our time politics were not what they are now and—well, friends, you can appreciate what I mean — you, Windom, who have been a pirate, and you, my hypocritical old Quaker, with your quiet little trade in slaves."



All turned.—Page 229.

deeply into that of Blake, for from this man had come his fine Dutch blood, the blood of Bogardus Van Eyck, the patroon. To know that Harry Hurlingham had been a toper was bad enough; that Peter Windom had been a pirate was worse; to hear Paul Van Eyck boasting in this fashion that he was self-made completed the wreck of his pride of family.

"Yes, I am a self-made man," repeated Mr. Van Eyck, "and I glory in it. My real parents are unknown, but I took the name of Matthew Van Eyck, my foster-father, a

This sally gave great amusement to its victims. They raised their glasses and drank to the speaker uproariously, vowing that they forgave his sharp tongue for the sake of his wit. Mr. Hurlingham added to the disorder by his maudlin cries of "More —more."

"Were it not that there are others more distinguished to address you I should give a few recollections of my political life," Mr. Van Eyck resumed. "But we are not here to praise ourselves. We are here to do honor to Jared Blake. With what pride we

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Caught his assailant a stunning blow on the chin.—Page 230.

can look upon him—with what——" Blake tried to get to his feet and make a modest protest against such adulation, but Captain Windom dragged him down into his chair. The interruption simply caused the speaker to raise his voice to a more impassioned height. "With what satisfaction, then, my friends, can we look upon this finished product of genealogical evolution who has the wealth of a colony in his control, who lives in a house which the kings of our day would have envied. In all New York no man is better known. Our descendant, sirs, is a multi-millionaire, a vestryman in the church, a captain in the militia, a governor of the Gotham Club, and a director in three banks—in brief, sirs, he is a gentleman. His glory reflects into past centuries and we bask in its light. When he wore my clothes at his ball last winter my name got into every paper in the land. From the Atlantic to the Pacific it was heralded: 'Mr. Blake wore a periwig, a suit of black velvet, with white embroidered waistcoat and white stockings, the costume being that in which his great-great-grandfather, Paul Van Eyck, appeared at the first inauguration ball.' What a time I had getting a ticket! Think of it—Paul Van Eyck raked up after a century and made famous in the greatest country on earth. Well may we do honor to such a descendant. A toast, then, to him in whose veins runs our blood, who has everything that we did not have,

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who is everything we longed to be—to Jared Blake, the gentleman."

It was a graceful tribute, gracefully given, but the confusion that covered Blake was not of pleasure. He sought in Mr. Van Eyck's face some trace of sarcasm or of jest. He found there only a benign smile, and even Friend Williams was beaming warm approval.

"We are proud of thee, Jared," the Quaker cried.

"Grandfathers——" Blake shouted, trying to rise. The Captain's heavy arm across his shoulders kept him pinned in his chair.

"You are too modest, my boy," the old sailor exclaimed, laughing. "Long life and health to you."

Mr. Williams was up. "Peace, Jared," he said. "Thy turn will come later. Thy modesty does thee credit, but thou must bear with me a few moments while I speak of the great work thou hast been doing for the uplifting—the uplifting——" He had raised a hand to give force to his words. He stopped speaking. The hand paused in midair, trembling, a long bony finger pointing to the doorway. "Friend, who art thou?" he cried.

All turned. A stranger had entered, a tall man, topping six feet three, with a powerful frame clothed in blackened jeans. His face was seamed and tanned, and though it shone with the polish of soap, it still bore traces of coal-dust. So with the hands. They were great horny hands, that seemed to seek some place to hide, for he was ill at ease in such a company and stood hesitating, as though he realized that a simple miner could have no right among the ancestors of Jared Blake. If he had looked for his portrait in the library as a passport, he had looked in vain.

"Gentlemen, pardon me," he said in a voice of embarrassment. "I do not come of my own wish, but it did seem that the first Jared Blake should be here to pay homage to his grandson."

"This, my man, is a meeting of great-great-grandfathers," cried Captain Windom sharply. "Jared had none on his father's side. If you leave we will pardon you."

The uncouth appearance of the Captain gave courage to the miner, and he faced him as he never would have faced the polite address or the shaking ruffles of Paul Van Eyck.

"No ancestors on his father's side, eh," he returned with a hearty laugh, advancing with so heavy a tread that his steel heel-tips clicked on the hardwood floor. "Surely, he had as many as on his mother's only they have been lost. As I am as far back as he can trace on his father's side, I came. And I stay!"

Mr. Hurlingham, aroused from stupor by the controversy, pulled himself up in his chair, and turned, leering at the newcomer. "Kick him out," he shouted, adding an oath in emphasis.

Blake caught him by the neckcloth, and a dexterous twist sent the Virginian hurtling under the table to silence.

"He knows no better," Jared said, stepping toward the stranger. "And you, sir, are welcome, for you must be my grandfather who died in the Punxatawney mine."

"In the sixties," the other answered simply.

"Died saving the lives of twenty of your men?"

The miner laughed. "I couldn't help it; I didn't stop to think. But speaking of the mine—it has paid you millions, eh?"

Blake had forgotten the courtly man in velvet and ruffles, the gallant commander of the privateer *Sparhawk*, the dashing Virginian, the godly merchant. His back was turned on them, and he stood with the miner's hand in his.

"Welcome, grandfather," he said earnestly. "Will you condescend to join this common company? Hopkins—another place here by me—plates, glasses, everything."

The other hung back. "About those millions," he returned with gentle insistence. "Of course, I did well to trust them all to you."

Blake was silent. The man in him was aroused by the sight of this giant whose story he knew. He pictured him that day in the depths of the mine, holding the key-beam against the grinding coal until his last imperilled fellow could pass to safety—then sinking beneath the black avalanche. This sooty man was an ancestor worth boasting; worth ten of the swaggering pirate who fought for gain, the politician in velvet and lace, or the tattered rake who sprawled beneath the table. Yes, worth ten of them, and as such he would do him homage. But those millions? He would embrace him,

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seat him in the place of honor and serve him. But those eyes! They held him off. This was no time to speak of paltry money matters. Yet the eyes persisted and the big hands, no longer awkward, were stretched out in appeal. Blake looked away.

"Of course, you have made the best use of them," came in an insistent tone.

"Of course," Blake answered feebly.

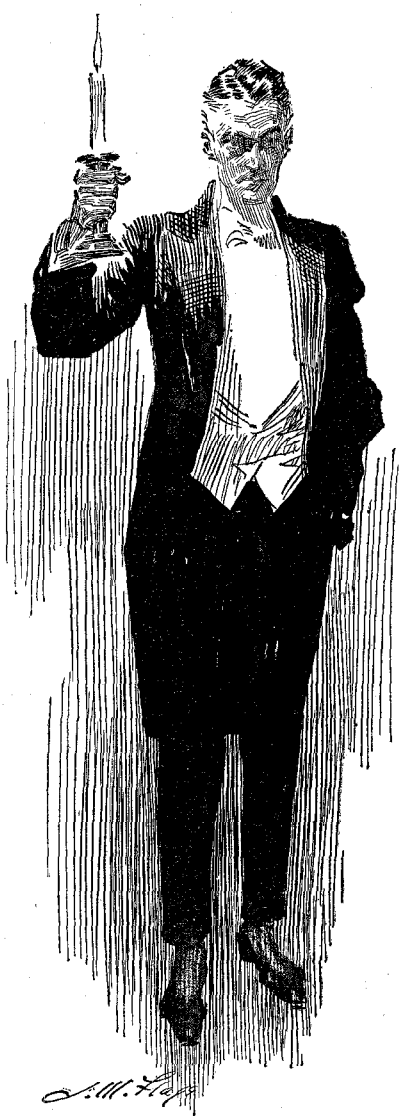
"You are not sure," the miner cried. "Do you mean——"

Thomas Williams began to pound the table. "Peace, friend, peace," he shouted. "Hast thou no manners? We came here to be merry and not to discuss thy millions."

"Out with you," roared the Captain, as with one hand he raised his glass and with the other pointed to the door.

The giant laughed. "Leave this house, for which I paid, to a sorry pack like you? The very food and drink——"

The glass and wine went full in his face. He struck out blindly, and caught his assailant a stunning blow on the chin, sending him reeling; in falling, the Captain seized the cloth and brought half the table's contents crashing about him. Adding to the confusion came the muffled cries of Mr. Hurlingham, who was kicking wildly to free himself from his prison, and the shouts of the servants rushing to stamp out the lighted candles which had been scattered about the room. The danger of fire passed, they faced another, but to flee in dismay. The Captain was sitting up amid the *débris* of the feast tugging at his pistols. He had almost disengaged one from his sash when Paul Van Eyck threw himself upon the sailor and bore him back to the floor, pinning his arms there. From a refuge behind a high-backed chair the hand of Friend Williams was extended in appeal, but his cries of "Peace" were drowned in the general disorder.



So I found him standing in the dining-room.—Page 231.

A single candle still burned on the table and the figures of his ancestors were shadowy as Blake saw them. Standing dazed amid the first confusion, in the quiet that followed he recovered his full senses, and with them came doubt. Beside him, in the dim light, shading away into the blackness, was the towering figure of the miner. He reached out and touched it, felt the very grit of the coal-dust on the sleeve of the jumper. Beneath him was Great-great-grandfather Van Eyck astride the prostrate form of the Captain. Real? Nonsense! He dreamed—he had been dreaming all the time—and to prove it he stamped on the boot that was struggling to free itself from the tangle of cloth. The sailor seemed very real. He kicked violently and hurled a volley of oaths at his descendant. Harry Hurlingham was stirring again, more noisy than ever, and now the frightened face of Friend Williams appeared above the back of his chair.

"Peace—peace," he bawled.

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"Yes—peace," cried Jared Blake. "Go, grandfathers, all of you, and leave me in peace. We are proud of each other—you and I—but pride and ignorance are one. You are dead. I have time to learn."

So I found him standing in the dining-room, holding the lighted candle and looking with set face into the blackness before him. It was long past midnight when I reached the house, to be admitted by the trembling Hopkins. Poor Hopkins! He almost clasped me in his arms. In all his life he had never seen the beat of "them Colonial Lords!" Be careful—go cautious—they would be shooting next. Thinking the man mad, I brushed by him. But I thought that Blake was mad, too, when I saw him standing there, alone, erect, the *débris* of the feast about his feet.

"Jared," I cried, "so the others got here, after all, and this is the result?"

"No," he said quietly. "They did not come. To-night I have been with my ancestors. They have just gone—thank God!"

WALDO TRENCH REGAINS HIS YOUTH

By Henry B. Fuller

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

I

WALDO TRENCH, I take it, was one of the youngest things that ever happened. These few pages, from the note-book of a middle-aged observer, will tell how he grew older; then how, through the application of *force majeure* at a critical stage of his career, he became young again.

When I say that Trench was young, I mean, in large part, that he was new, that he was fresh—using this latter word in its "good" sense; nay, in its best. For Trench, in his twenty-sixth year, still retained an extraordinary susceptibility to new impressions.

His newness was perhaps less a matter of experience (or lack of experience) than of environment. Regarding this environment copious particulars bubbled to the surface through the twelve dragging days that the *Macedonia* required to get us from the Jersey water-front to the harbor of Genoa. Had I but known something of Trench's early surroundings on the occasion of my first encounter with him, the day before the *Macedonia* sailed, I might have come forward more quickly with my tribute (slight as it was) of indulgence and sympathy.

Now, I am of course "city-broke," as Trench himself would quaintly express it. Still there are times when the roar of the metropolis becomes too strong for the most accustomed ears, and when a step aside from the tumult of Broadway seems necessary if the human mechanism is to endure any longer. Such a moment came to me as I was returning from my final negotiations with the steamship agents. I had almost reached the Post-office when a spire, a portico, and a huddle of gravestones united in saying, "Pause and rest." The day was warm, the clamor of traffic was outrageous; the church offered me a "retreat," and I entered.

For a minute or two I thought I had those bland, smug, shadowy precincts, full of belated echoes from the by no means impeccable Wren, quite to myself; but I perceived, presently, that another person was sharing my retirement: a somewhat tall, loose-jointed young man who was tiptoeing down the aisle with an effect of elaborate reverence. He carried an indifferently bound gray book, back into which a large map had been awkwardly refolded, and I saw that he was not a devotee, but a tourist. I suppose that I myself at one time may have tiptoed up the nave of Canterbury or on toward the tribune of San Paolo Fuori to much the same effect.

"Dear me!" said I to myself, in smiling

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recollection of earlier days, "this youth is making the most of it, surely!"

I thought of all those old things at Ravenna which were soon—thanks to my sudden surrender to the caprice of travel—to be mine, and added:

"What reckless improvidence, however! He is bestowing his whole purse where a single sixpence would more than suffice!"

The young man bore down upon me with wide-open, ingenuous eyes and an evident fulness of feeling that demanded speech for relief. I felt him as stalking forward across the wide, horizonless plain of utter social destitution, and ploughing a pure ether that had never been defiled; and when he threw himself, with a certain frank confidence, upon the only other person present, I was in no degree surprised. Neither was I surprised when he solemnly referred to the mediocre fabric about us as an "ancient edifice" and naïvely expressed his pleasure in the privilege of standing beneath a roof that had endured for a hundred and fifty years.

"A century and a half! think of it! And those cherub-headed tombstones outside, with dates running back to—back to——"

"Venerable, indeed," I murmured kindly.

"I have just been sitting in Governor Clinton's pew," he went on in a tone of appreciative awe. "How it brings back the old Revolutionary days! I could almost fancy the governor himself sitting there beside me, in his buff-and-blue uniform, and his sword, and his wig. All this makes a wig very real to me, let me tell you."

"Yes, this old place is wonderfully loaded down with history," I contributed indulgently.

He raised his eyes to the eighteenth-century inanities of cornice and pediment that surrounded us, and half lifted his hand with a curious sort of impassioned restraint.

"I expect to see few things more impressive than this," he said slowly.

"You are travelling?" I asked.

"I am beginning to—yes, sir," he responded. "I sail for Europe to-morrow."

II

I HAD not been many hours aboard the *Macedonia* before the general situation and its enveloping atmosphere became tolerably clear; our good ship, I discovered, had been pressed into the service of Culture. Along with two or three of her sisters, she was co-operating in a scheme of travel-study—an elaborate arrangement that elastically offered a wide choice of dates and a wider choice of routes, together with much counsel, guidance, and positive instruction from many competent minds. The tone of our company was strongly educational; a full half of the *Macedonians*, I presently perceived, were crying for succour—in so far as instruction can work salvation. Study and discussion went on all about me, and such as would listen were addressed in the saloon, the very first evening out, upon "The Art Impulse in Human Society."

Trench had not told me what boat he was expecting to cross on, but I felt that such a *milieu* called loudly for his presence; I was not utterly dumfounded, therefore, when my first stroll on deck developed him. He had already found worthy objects for the exercise of his frank and facile good-will: a pair of ladies who, under his brooding care, were trying to settle down in their deck-chairs. The younger, a pretty but serious-looking girl of twenty, might surrender herself readily enough, I thought, to the dominant interests of the cruise; she would offer her budding nature, in all openness and sympathy, to the plastic touch of culture. Her companion, an ample woman of forty, with an air of half-suppressed jollity, left me, for the moment, in doubt. I could not decide whether she was a fit subject for "improvement," or whether she considered herself to have accomplished the swing of the grand circle and to have got around to the point where simplicity ruled once more, and where culture, as a moving force, was genially ignored. The latter turned out to be more nearly the case. Trench claimed me at once as an old acquaintance, and as soon as he had ascertained that society knew me by the name of Aurelius Gilmore he presented me—all with a self-confident *sang-froid* that stripped the social temple of its last shred of upholstery and left human intercourse to be carried on in something but little better than a stark vacuum.

"Why didn't you tell me yesterday you were coming along?" he asked brightly.

"Dear me! I am always 'coming along,'" I responded. "It's so easy when a man lives close to one end of the ferry."

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My presentation of the voyage to Europe as a thoughtless impromptu seemed to dash him. He, evidently, took it as a sacramental matter, and there was a moment of awkward silence—or would have been, if the elder lady had not found in the reference to "yesterday" an opening for the moment's needs.

"Yes, we met in an ancient fane," I said to satisfy her, and related some of the details of the encounter.

"Ancient fiddlesticks!" she pronounced gayly. Nobody took offence, and within five minutes it was as if all four of us had met in the church and had maintained the most intimate relationship ever since.

To this little company Trench was presently spinning his Odyssey: a recital inconceivably short and simple; bare, too, save for the draperies that his eager hands seemed to be snatching from the immediate future. His earliest consciousness of maturity, it transpired, had come to him at a small town in western Nebraska—he left us to make the place as remote, as forlorn, as empty of social opportunity as we liked, and we did not scant the occasion. I myself, indeed, made it all so piteous as to provoke an indignant correction.

"It may have been pretty bad," he declared bluntly, "but it wasn't as bad as that."

I begged pardon suitably and the recital moved on.

Remote and empty his Stapleville may have been, but not remote and empty enough. His next stage came with the rush to Oklahoma. He himself was well to the fore in that wild dash.

"Aha!" cried Mrs. Madeline K. Pritchard heartily. "I wish I had been in it myself! But about that time I must have been poking along toward the Second Cataract."

"Why, aunt!" said the girl in a shocked undertone; "can you speak in that way of Egypt?"

"I guess I can," retorted the elder lady breezily. "Next time I start traipsing off it will be westward. Oklahoma is *modern*."

Trench looked open-eyed thanks, and the young girl drew into herself a little.

"Bessie, here, has a great reverence for them old ancient monarchies——" began Mrs. Pritchard.

The girl winced. "O aunt, please don't talk so before strangers, and please don't——"

"Oh, it's my grammar, is it? Well, I've noticed that the best people in Venice and Naples talk in their local dialect when they choose, so why shouldn't I, too? I've been tired of grammar for years, and——"

"And please don't call me 'Bessie,'" the girl went on in a lower tone.

"Very well, Miss Elizabeth Payne, I won't, then"—with a grimace. "Another innocent just beginning the *Vita Nuova*—and taking it hard," she murmured for me alone over her shoulder.

"What *is* your dialect?" I asked politely.

"All in due course, dear sir; gentlemen first, however. We have heard about Mr. Trench's travels, but what, Mr. Gilmore, of yours?"

"They're not greatly varied. Sometimes I go from New York to Naples and back, and sometimes I go from New York to Southampton and back."

"That," said Mrs. Pritchard decidedly, "tells me nothing I didn't know already. You may need a little Oklahoma, too."

"Next year, perhaps. And now——"

"Oh, me? I'm from Ohio," announced Madeline K. Pritchard proudly. "I live near Cleveland. We own the earth."

"Your family is fortunate," I observed.

"My 'family'? That does very well, if you mean the whole Ohio crowd. As I say, we own the earth, New York included. Do you expect us to be modest? Must we duck? Must we shrink?"

I saw, now, the lady's "sanctions"—the sources of her more than metropolitan assurance. She sat near the centre and ruled over East and West alike; from her seat of boundless confidence she might claim—or affect—whatever she chose.

"We groan under your tyranny," I submitted.

"And Bes—and Elizabeth, here, is another of your tyrants. She lives near Cleveland, too. Some notable things are produced in the Western Reserve."

"I believe you," I said gallantly. "And to some of your tyrants we are only too ready to bow."

The young lady seemed to be withdrawing herself from any comment, however oblique. But she gave a sidelong glance at Trench—the freemasonry of youth in the presence of elders—and if her look meant anything at all, she may have intended to ask:

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"How can middle-aged people be so silly?"

I hope it didn't mean anything; but the young are often so exacting with us.

It meant little, apparently, to Trench. Though he drew back an attention that had strayed over the fussy uneventfulness of the sea, I guessed that what concerned him most was to regain the ear of the house and that his Odyssey was not quite complete.

I was right. The rush of the land-seekers, Ohio once left behind, had been closely followed by the rush of a great philanthropist, and the new library was ready almost as soon as the new court-house. The books were not many, but they opened up novel vistas to the youthful Westerner (as Trench let Mrs. Pritchard call him); and after two or three years of "empire-building" he had left the broad abundance of his acres to the care of a younger brother and had started eastward to see the great world.

"Good!" cried Madeline Pritchard. "Now we are all accounted for," she added, as she intercepted the deck-steward, with his tray of sandwiches.

III

On reaching shore, the little party thus happily formed did not break up at once. This means, principally, that I escorted the two ladies through the Genoese palaces. Though nothing can raise Genoa to the first rank, I did not mind giving a day to the Via Nuova; Genoa gave me the earliest of my Italian experiences, back in my impressionable twenties, and I shall always think of her with a decent fondness. So we saw a good many grandiose court-yards and staircases and lingered before a good many portraits of the old Genoese nobility. But in our progress from palace to palace Mrs. Pritchard showed a great readiness to let her attention stray to street types and to other matters of contemporaneous interest; and in a quiet angle of a certain magnificent *salone* her niece took occasion to make an extended *apologia*.

"Aunt Madeline doesn't care for the guide-book sights. She just puts up with them on my account. She has been everywhere and seen everything. She has gone around the world—twice."

Elizabeth Payne made a large solemn circle with one hand. Then she made another in the reverse direction.

"You mean she has worked it both ways?"

"Yes. Once she sailed from Boston, and once from San Francisco. She has seen ever so many historical things. She says she is tired of the past and wants to keep in the present. She thinks, though, that I ought to know Rubens and Van Dyck"—with a motion, here, to certain dark canvases high on the wall behind us. "But I tell her I must get to Florence to see that dear Fra Angelico. I told her a year ago that I couldn't live another month without seeing Fra Angelico. But she has heard of an exposition at Milan and must see the latest things in French autos. I tell her that Milan itself is an exposition. So is Verona. So is Vicenza, even."

I caught a glimpse of Mrs. Pritchard in the next saloon; she was busy, at a wide, open window, with the life of the street.

"I see she doesn't care for picture galleries."

"Sometimes she does, if the pictures are modern—and bad. She says she is tired of good art, and she has promised me some exquisite atrocities—as she puts it—in Rome. She has just heard of a new exhibition there, and is saving herself for it. I'm afraid you don't understand," the girl concluded anxiously.

"Oh yes, tolerably," I assured her.

"But let me explain. She is 'reverting'—that's what she calls it. She used to have some beautiful pictures of her own, but she sent them away to a gallery, and in their place she has put some oleographs of Swiss mountain scenery. She likes them, she says, because they're 'nature,' and so 'nice and oily.'"

"Ah!" said I.

"And her furniture!" the girl went on. "Of course she threw out all her House Beautiful things long ago; but lately some very good Sheraton reproductions have followed them—to make room for the hair-cloth and carved walnut of the early '50s. Her rugs are terrible. All her Navajos are aniline dyed."

"Oh!" said I.

"She has heard all the finest orchestras in Europe and America, and really knows a good deal about the best music. But she prefers to run after hand-organs. And last month she bought a gramophone."

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"Revolt, indeed!" I muttered.

"When I was little she would bring me the loveliest perfumes from Paris. But now, at home, she often has a boiled dinner, and she lets the kitchen-door stand open while it's cooking. She has filled her window-boxes with marigolds. And you have heard the kind of English she uses when she wants to!"

"More of us will get that way," I mumbled darkly. "Too much art; too much civilization."

"And she has a cultivated taste in fiction, yet nowadays she reads——"

"No more, I beg!" said I quickly. "I have written one or two small things myself."

"And this is my first trip abroad," the poor child breathed brokenly. "And there was nobody else to bring me."

She was throwing herself on my chivalry. I resolved that she should see the Old World to advantage and to the fullest satisfaction, if I could help her; and I told her so. "And as for Fra Angelico," I ended, "I will take you to San Marco and the Uffizi myself."

I spoke as if claiming a monopoly. I was set right almost at once. A somewhat tall, loose-jointed figure appeared in the doorway—Trench, overjoyed to see us after a separation of twenty-four hours. Mrs. Pritchard, as soon as she perceived him, left the window whence she had been watching three or four street-boys nagging her cabman, and came in to get the cream of Trench's first impressions of things Italian.

He had aged perceptibly in the meanwhile—more than a century.

"I have just come from a church that was built as far back as 1620!" he declared in a pulsation of pure, enraptured energy. Then, to me more directly:

"What you must have thought of me in that church back in New York! And what do you suppose I did that same day, after leaving you? Went to a museum and wasted a whole hour over Copley and Gilbert Stuart—mere things of yesterday! But the moment I heard about all these Van Dycks!"—and he waved toward one of those masterpieces, darkling in its massive frame. "Aren't they magnificent!" he cried.

"Certainly you are more in the movement now," said Mrs. Pritchard indulgently.

"Do you know Alessi?" he asked us generally.

Nobody did. "Why, Alessi built half the palaces in this street—perhaps this very one, too—away back in fifteen seventy something. I hear they used to call it the Via Nuova—no wonder they changed the name! Not know Alessi? Why——"

"I seldom follow out the fag-ends of movements," I said languidly; "though I once did meditate a monograph on Bernini. Still, why look too long? Must we watch the rose until it falls to pieces? Wait for Brunelleschi and Alberti at Florence."

I saw that I had disconcerted him, as had happened before; so I went on:

"This is a good idea of yours—taking Europe as they sometimes take history in schools: beginning at the end and working backward. However, save your strength, and remember that you have but just about so much film to expose. If you go on like this when you're in only up to your ankles, how will you do when you find yourself in up to your chin? Wait for Rome."

"Yes, let us wait for Rome," said Elizabeth Payne with a touch of solemnity, and I felt that she was accepting me as an ally against her world-surfeited aunt.

IV

Some weeks passed by. Mrs. Pritchard had gone to Milan, and I was hoping that before long she would deign to recall my claims to proficiency in motor-driving, gained with good friends in stony and sinuous Connecticut. Trench, when next I encountered him, had not yet indeed made Rome, but had got as far on his way as Florence. We came together one forenoon on the Lungarno, at the head of the Carraja bridge. I soon learned that he had added another century or so to his years.

"How glorious!" he exclaimed, waving that active right hand of his at the yellow river and at the opposing rows of blandly stuccoed house-fronts. "Here I am at the very heart of the Renaissance! I'm doing Brunelleschi, as you advised; and I've seen the Raphael portraits in the Pitti, and— Oh, forget, if you can, how ridiculous I was at Genoa! I was merely eating at the second table and didn't know it. I was groping about in a muggy twilight and thinking it was a dazzling high noon. I was tossing off

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there on the remote horizon when I might have been striking out for the very lighthouse itself." He patted emphatically a large maroon volume that he was carrying under his arm.

How the young fellow was coming on, to be sure—growing, towering, expanding!

I glanced at the maroon volume. "Is that your lighthouse?"

"You've guessed it!" he cried. "Look here! It's the life of Isabella d'Este. Do you know her?"

"Oh, yes," I answered. "Isabella and I are friends of old."

"Well, wasn't she a winner!" he joyed. "The very hub of the wheel! Just look here," he continued, wrenching open his book; "this is a picture of her. How she throws into the shade those commonplace creatures Van Dyck did at Genoa! Recognize her?"

"Indeed I do. A very speaking likeness."

"And didn't she *run* things!" Trench continued, pounding the page with a sinewy fist. "Gathering the best poets and painters round her. Collecting all sorts of curios and knick-knacks. Corresponding with all the clever people. Setting the fashions for Europe—why, all the queens and princesses from Portugal to Poland used to send to Mantua to learn what to wear and how to behave. She was the first queen of modern society—the regular Mrs. Ah—u'm of her day!"

"Yes," I assented; "Mrs. Ah—h and Mrs. U'm—m rolled into one."

"I'm going to Mantua next week," declared Trench; "and to Ferrara as well. I think I can break away from our party long enough for that. Just think of visiting those palace-halls where——"

"I'm afraid you may find them rather bare to-day—Ferrara, anyhow," I suggested. But I remembered his success with Governor Clinton's pew and said no more, except to add: "On the whole, Isabella compares very favorably with Mrs. Pritchard."

"Oh, yes—those steamer ladies. Are they here?"

"They are. Mrs. Pritchard, I am told, goes to the Gambrinus Halle every evening she can find anybody to take her—it strikes the modern note, she says; and her niece is hot on the trail of Fra Angelico."

Ah, many the dear ladies—some young, some older—some expectant, some disappointed—who have been consoled in Florence by the early Tuscan masters!

"I thought Miss Payne a very nice girl—what I saw of her," pronounced Trench.

"My own opinion," said I. In fact, I could easily have made out a long list of young women who would have been welcomed with more difficulty by my mother and sisters than this young woman from the Western Reserve.

"Earnest, studious, and all that," Trench proceeded. "Rather pretty, too. Fra Angelico was a painter, wasn't he?"

"Yes."

"Earlier than Raphael?"

"A century or so."

He strummed thoughtfully upon the parapet and stared in some abstraction at the opposite quay. "Perhaps I ought to look into him."

"Never mind," I rejoined; "*I'm* looking after Fra Angelico. You can easily go farther back than that—he's almost modern. Try Giotto; he's older, and really more important."

"Thank you," replied Trench soberly.

Just then a shining new motor-car came whirring along. In front, with the chauffeur sat Elizabeth Payne; in the tonneau was Mrs. Pritchard, with one of the travel-study professors beside her. Madeline K. Pritchard had not been to the Milan Exposition for nothing.

The *Macedonians* immediately foregathered, and when Mrs. Pritchard's reverberant reception of Trench back into the fold was accomplished, I heard the voice of Elizabeth Payne saying, in a kind of strained ecstasy:

"We've seen it at last!"

"Eh?" said I.

"We've seen it—Angelico's 'Coronation.'"

"I should think we had!" exclaimed her aunt. "Four times to the Uffizi, and every time that blessed picture in possession of the copyists. But to-day *our* time finally came, just as we had about given up all hope of ever——"

"At last!" repeated Elizabeth Payne, rapt.

"But, dear me——" I began in dismay. "Well, anyhow, you can't say but that *I* did everything in my power to——"

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"I know," said the girl. "You have been kindness itself, dear Mr. Gilmore, and you deserved to be with us to-day."

Trench was staring in complete self-forgetfulness at the strange exaltation of our devotee. Mrs. Pritchard cast a quizzical glance over both of them and said:

"Yes, that great matter is out of the way, and the next thing will be something else. We should be glad to take both of you gentlemen with us, if we could possibly find room."

"Where are you going?" asked Trench informally.

"To Pisa."

"For the Campo Santo and all?" I inquired.

"Well, we may do the Campo Santo and all," admitted Mrs. Pritchard, "but what we are after is the King's Zoo, at San Rossore. I want Professor Robbins to see the dromedaries."

A shiver passed over Elizabeth Payne. Dromedaries in Italy; she felt the incongruity, as well she might.

"Perhaps we shall 'take' them—show your camera, Bessie," persisted her aunt. "We are prepared to deal with anything that presents itself. If we meet Fra Angelico on the way we shall snap-shot him. Well, good-by. *Avanti*, Serafino!"

The girl made a motion as if to tuck her camera still farther out of sight. Mr. Robbins, an elderly man with a close-cropped gray beard, held up an admonitory finger to Trench as the machine gave forth its first chug and tremor.

"Don't forget the lecture in the hotel parlor this evening," he said; "'Florentine Society in Dante's Day,' you know."

Mrs. Pritchard openly snickered, and off the car sped toward Bocca d'Arno.

"There you have it," I said to Trench, as the little party disappeared from view; "Giotto, Dante—they go together, as a matter of course. If you are going to be mediæval, do it thoroughly. Don't stop half-way up the stream, but strike straight for the fountain-head itself."

Trench was already dropping into a brown study; it was almost as if the look in Elizabeth Payne's face had been left behind on his own. His arm gave the big maroon book an impatient hunch, and I trembled for the future of my old friend, Isabella d'Este.

V

At Rome Mrs. Pritchard definitely cast her travel-study friends adrift. She had never belonged to their company, of course, but she had joined it or dropped it here and there, as her somewhat cynical necessity for diversion had waxed or waned. "However, I can't follow them through such an epitome of the world as Rome," she had declared, upon encountering the familiar sights and sounds of the Piazza di Spagna; and she added that she had heroically resolved to forego Professor Tait's very best lecture, his "Rome in the Time of Augustus."

Just before leaving Florence I had run across Trench in one of the leafy alleys of the Cascine. Isabella d'Este had fared as I feared.

"She was a mere society woman," he declared, as he plucked at a hedge of box; "a modern, like the rest of us. I don't think I can give much more time to anything as recent as the Renaissance. I shall leave out Ferrara and Mantua, and go, instead, to Assisi—I've got to know about St. Francis. Compare Isabella d'Este with Dante's Beatrice! I consider Beatrice the central woman of the world, and I've got to understand the conditions that produced her. Miss Payne agrees with me."

"The deuce she does!" I thought to myself. I saw the young pair wandering away together into the bewildering fogs of mediæval mysticism, and thought it but right to bring the situation to the notice of that positive spirit, Madeline K. Pritchard.

Immediately after my arrival in Rome I called upon her at the Bristol. She soon began to understand what I meant. But she took matters with the most disconcerting good-nature.

"It's true enough," she declared," that Bessie herself is as keen as ever on Fra Angelico. She is inquiring after him here just as she inquired after him at Florence. Why, she asked for him at Milan, when she ought to have been occupied with autos and air-ships; and she will expect to find him at Naples, when she ought to be learning how to make maccaroni. But——"

"But——"

"But the young man himself. *He* doesn't care any longer for the mediævals. Haven't you heard? Haven't you met him here?"

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"No. What has happened?"

"You knew about his plan for Assisi?"

"Yes."

"He went there. So did the whole travel-class, of course. And while there, he saw a great light, and conversion followed."

"How did it happen?"

"If you remember Professor Tait——"

"The one in your car at Florence?"

"No; that was Professor Robbins. Professor Tait is quite different."

"How?"

"Robbins is only a Middle-Age mooner, but Tait has a real education—one of the regular old classical sort. He dotes on Livy and Horace, and quotes them whenever a suitable occasion offers. That kind."

"He didn't quote them at Assisi?"

"He did—just."

"Apropos of what?"

"Why, apropos of the temple of Minerva, of course. He caught young Trench and pooh-poohed St. Francis's church to him, and Giotto's pictures, and told him that if he wanted to get the foundations of a good solid education he must give up the Middle Ages and concentrate on Rome. He brought up Goethe."

"I see. Goethe, I recall, came to Assisi and ignored the monastery and gave all his attention to the temple."

"'What is good enough for the central sun of culture is good enough for me'—thus spake Tait to Trench, according to Trench's own account. Then the old fellow got in his line from Horace or somebody, and Waldo was won."

She called him Waldo—only for the sake of alliteration, I hoped.

"So he has been won over to Rome? But this is all wrong!" I cried.

"How so?"

"I—I had meant him to go to Ravenna. I had rather thought of going there myself, but shall hardly do so now. Ravenna's a quaint, quiet place where he could meditate on the mosaics and the other Byzantine doings to his heart's content. He has made a bolt that is simply shocking. He has treated a thousand years like a mere yesterday. He ought at least to have paused half-way. Ravenna," I concluded ruefully, "would have been just the thing."

"It's too late for Ravenna, now," she answered me. "*Nulla*—— How do they say it?"

"*Vestigia nulla retrorsum*?"

"I guess so. And as for long jumps," she went on, "I believe he is ready, by this time, to jump any chasm whatever."

"There *are* several yet," I acknowledged.

"I should say so," she acquiesced.

"What is he busy with at present?"

"I believe they're doing the palace of the Cæsars, on the Palatine."

"They?"

"Why, yes. Bessie has gone along with him and taken her camera."

"Well! Does she expect to find 'Coronations' and 'Assumptions' there?"

"Don't ask *me*. Many's the long year since I have seen the ruins on the Palatine."

"Do you think that Roman emperors are better for her than mediæval saints? Recall those terrible orgies of Caligula and the rest of them."

"I don't believe they'll make much of the orgies. That complicated camera will need all the attention Bessie has to give. And Trench himself is as correct a young fellow as I ever met."

"U'm!"

"Yes, u'm! He called the other evening and sat an hour in the very chair you're occupying now. He talked in a very straightforward way about his Western interests, and gave me ever so much information regarding Oklahoma. It seems he has got three different farms down there—or ranches, or plantations, or whatever they call them—and several town lots. He gets his corn to market a full six weeks before they do it in Illinois; and he raises cotton, too—miles of it. What does your land, produce, Mr. Gilmore?"

Such impertinence! "I have always lived in an adequate and dignified way," I answered, a bit stiffly. "My agent over there cuts my coupons."

I had no great desire to be forced into an open competition. And as for that poor child, with her mediæval obsession, I saw that the impetuous Trench was passing her at a canter.

VI

One morning, ten or twelve days later, Trench burst in upon me in my room at the Londres.

"Why, Gilmore," he cried, "what's this I hear about the Etruscans?"

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"I don't know," I rejoined. "What *is* it you hear about the Etruscans?"

"The whole country between Florence and Rome is full of them! Why haven't I come across them? Why have I never seen any of their——"

"Because they're all dead, perhaps. Because the last of them went the way of all flesh two thousand years ago."

"Don't I know that?" he began hotly.

"There, there," I said. "Sit down and tell me who started you after the Etruscans."

He flopped into a chair. "It's like this. I was walking through the Forum yesterday, looking over the Temple of the Vestals; and when I climbed up to the roadway an old fellow was standing there (a sort of *savant,* if that's the word), who looked at me and—sniffed. He looked down on the ruins themselves, too, with a curious sort of contempt. It made me hot, and I asked him what he meant. He gave it back to me pretty direct, in some sort of foreign accent—it may have been German. He told me I was wasting my time on a lot of mere modernities—said the whole Forum had been straightened out several years ago. He made me feel as if I had been kindergartening. 'What are *you* busy about?' I asked. He replied that he was digging at Vulci—he was after Etruscan tombs. Vulci—know anything about it?"

"I've heard the name; but there are easier places to reach."

"I'm going to reach them," he declared.

"And the Forum, with all Miss Payne's photographs?" I hinted.

"She has found an early mediæval church there, and is doing its frescoes."

Well and good, thought I. The breach was widening once more. I resolved to help Trench retire still farther "up stage"; presently, perhaps, he might be absorbed into the darkness of the ultimate background.

"The Etruscans," I began blithely, "were the first schoolmasters of the Romans. They whipped those poor, uncouth creatures into shape and passed them on to the Greeks."

"Is it true that Etruria was an aggregation of splendid cities when Rome was just a straw village set in the mud?"

"Of course it is."

Trench drew a long breath. "Well, I vow!"

"Don't try to magnify the early Romans," I proceeded didactically. "They were a barbarous, bumptious lot, bare of every earthly thing except the determination to boss—or, the 'will to power,' as Nietzsche would express it."

Trench sat staring.

"When Macaulay," I went on, "rises to remark:

> "Ho, trumpets, sound a war-note!
> Ho, lictors, clear the way!

don't fancy that those fine things, and all the rest of them, originated in Rome itself. No; everything that adorned and dignified early Rome was a straight steal from Etruria: temples, sewers, circuses and games, augurs and haruspices; the togas, the trumpets, the curule chairs, the very fasces carried by the early Victorian lictors aforesaid. Next time you come across the fasces printed on an old greenback or sculptured on any of our public buildings, think of Vetulonia, where this most serviceable symbol was devised."

"Vetulonia," murmured Trench. "I'll go there before I'm a week older."

"Don't," I counselled. "Vetulonia today is only a heap of brush-grown ruin on a hillock in the most pestilent depths of the Maremma. Try Cære or Tarquinii."

"Very well," replied Trench, bringing out his notebook; "I will. And I'll cut loose from the travel-study people this very day. I've combed over their whole list of talent and there isn't a single Etruscan expert among them. What kind of travel-study is that?"

He reached for his hat.

"Abuse the Romans as much as you like," he added; "I'm passing them up, anyway."

VII

When Mrs. Pritchard announced her perfect willingness to take a spin toward Tarquinii—known to our modern day as Corneto—Bessie Payne, it was easy to see with half an eye, hardly dared believe the evidence of her ears.

"Why, aunt," she stammered—she was far too pleased to be able to keep silence—"you can't care anything about Etruscan tombs!"

"I can't, eh?" responded Madeline K.

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Pritchard genially. "When you say that you make the worst guess of your life. I can, and do. I expect such a lark as I haven't had for many a day."

"I hope," said the girl seriously, "that we shall be able to respect Mr. Trench's feelings. He is very much wrapped up in Etruria."

"*I* shall," retorted her aunt. "I can't answer for you. I only wish, Mr. Gilmore, that I saw any possible way of taking you with us. But Serafino—I have come to depend so much on him; I feel such a complete trust in him——"

"You're too good," I murmured. "But I am engaged for the day at Tivoli."

Trench presently arrived at the Bristol, and the *portier* helped him into his place. He had already raced through the Etruscan Museum at the Vatican and was master of a deep fund of by-gone lore. "Bessie's going to get enough of tombstones to last her one good while," declared her aunt. I almost blushed for the expansive creature. It was as if she were already exiling the girl to some far land so new that nobody had yet had a chance to die there.

"You've got the camera, Bessie?" inquired their bustling chaperon, looking back from her post beside Serafino.

"Here it is." Yes, there it was, beyond all doubt, snuggled in between Bessie and Trench.

"You will find little enough to photograph, I imagine," was my contribution at this stage; "and find it very hard to photograph that little."

"Oh, well," observed Bessie, as contentedly as you please, "I shall be able to catch up one or two souvenirs of the day."

Serafino performed some manœuvres round the spouting Triton in the middle of the piazza—I could have done as well—and off they plunged to desecrate the long kept silences of deepest Etruria.

I was half inclined to follow by train. Still, that would not have been altogether dignified—nor, in fact, had they suggested, as they might have done—my doing so. Besides, there was that utterly superfluous fib about Tivoli. So I left them to their own courses. "They'll soon get enough of those bleak, bare, bumpy hills down by that miasmatic seashore," I comforted myself.

"How was it?" I asked Mrs. Pritchard, the next aftneroon, on the Pincian. The band was playing Mascagni and she was perversely pretending to find their doings adorable.

"Well," she replied grimly, "it was—different. It enlarged my horizon wonderfully. But I am crippled for life, and I doubt if Serafina has a sound joint left in her body."

"Serafina?"

"I mean the car, of course. So long as Serafino is the name of the chauffeur, Serafina will be the name of the chauffée. When Serafino goes—I hope he won't for a long time—Serafina's name will be changed accordingly. If Vittorio succeeds to Serafino, then Vittoria succeeds to Serafina. If Francesco, Francesca. If Giuseppe, Giuseppina. You catch on?"

"Readily."

"I should hate awfully to lose Serafino. How I could have wheedled him away from Florence and kept him so long remains a constant surprise to me. Some days I think he adores me; other days it seems as if I had only hypnotized him. And there are other days still when I feel sure he looks on me as the queerest creature that ever came along the pike, and is only holding on to see what I shall do next!"

How tedious a clever woman can be! "You are not here alone, I suppose?" I inquired with a glance over the circling carriages and the sauntering throng.

"I? Alone in such a large concourse as this? Hardly. I am being looked after by a pair of young people just behind that shrubbery. Whistle and they'll come out."

They came without my whistling, and as they babbled forth their sepulchral litany it was hard to tell which had become the more thorough-going Etruscan of the two.

"How about the camera?" I asked Miss Payne.

"Why, things turned out pretty nearly as you prophesied. Still, it was a great pleasure even to try to help such an enthusiastic student as Mr. Trench. Enthusiasm is the very savor of travel—don't you think so?"

"Undoubtedly."

"And aunt behaved nobly," the girl went on. "And Serafino was nice, too. In fact, we all agreed that Mr. Trench"—here she lowered her voice for me alone—"was entitled to the very pleasantest day that could be devised. I really got six or eight good exposures; I'll show them to you some time."

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"And you are actually interested in Etruscan antiquities?"

"Indeed, I am; immensely so," she returned, with the clearest glance and the honestest intonation in the world.

"How long will her interest last?" I inwardly wondered; and our common attention reverted to the brilliant scene about us.

VIII

I SAW nothing of Trench for the next fortnight. I understood vaguely that he had renounced the world for a little and was pursuing his researches farther into Etruria. I fancied him as radiating in endless excursions from Viterbo, or as toiling solitary along the remotest reaches of the Maremma coast-line. Meanwhile, it devolved upon me, naturally enough, to provide entertainment for Elizabeth Payne. I recalled two or three Angelicos at the Vatican, and took her, in all haste, to see them. She showed less interest than I expected, and began to hint, lightly yet insistently, about going on to the Etruscan Museum.

"Those dead and gone things!" I exclaimed disparagingly.

"Life can be put into them," was her rejoinder.

We spent two hours among the sombre Etruscans, passing in review their vases and *focolari* and cinerary urns and goldsmith's work and the reproductions of those faded subterranean frescoes at Corneto.

"So *this* is how they looked!" was her comment on the pictured games and dances and banquets. She gazed long and earnestly at the various gaudy creatures that were capering about with more than doubtful propriety—singular decorations for the house of death.

"My preference is for Fra Angelico," I said pointedly. She ignored my rebuke. On the way back to the hotel I took her to the tomb of her painter at Santa Maria sopra Minerva. It left her cold—other tombs were wanted now. I sighed patiently; of course nobody—not even the most docile—can be kept at one stage forever.

A few days later I met Trench in the Corso. The marks of a strenuous fortnight were all over him.

"What luck?" I asked.

"Oh, very fair," he replied. "I have had an interesting experience, and can show you a few things, if you care to come to my rooms."

"Certainly," said I.

He led me sedately through a quarter of a mile of street and introduced me soberly enough into his apartment. His own interest, as he began to display his acquisitions, was many degrees below the pitch I had anticipated.

He showed me some trivial bronzes and a few vases—or rather, the fragments from which vases were to be reconstructed: ordinary *roba di museo*, but even less good than the average. He languidly detailed the various incidents, more or less picturesque, that had attended their discovery. What was the matter?

"This cup," he said, putting together the red and black fragments of a promising *kylix*, "I had thought of giving to Miss Payne."

"Ah, yes," said I indifferently.

He laid the fragments aside with an indifference hardly less, and stood staring thoughtfully through the window. Presently he spoke.

"Day before yesterday, at my last site, I met an Englishman—the only creature besides *contadini* and *vetturini* I had encountered for a week."

"He was after the Etruscans, too?"

"N—no," replied Trench. "No, he wasn't," he repeated with an abrupt emphasis. "I was examining some mighty fine old walls—or at least foundations—when he came toward me through a thicket of underbrush, hatchet in hand. He poked his foot at those immensely venerable stones, as I thought them, and said disgustedly, 'Why, they're only Etruscan!'

"'What did you expect them to be?' I asked.

"'I'm after the Pelasgians,' he returned in the sourest tone imaginable; 'what is this modern rubbish to *me?*' And he stalked away again through the underbrush. Tell me, Gilmore, who were the Pelasgians, and are they older than the Etruscans?" The fellow's face of strained concern was pitiful.

"Now, see here, Trench," I began, "you've gone on long enough assuming that I know everything. The line must be drawn somewhere, and I draw it right here."

"But *did* the Etruscans drive out the

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Pelasgians and tear down their buildings and use the foundations for their own?"

"That's supposed to have happened in a few places—at Cortona and Cosa and so on."

"Then the Pelasgians are the older?"

"Yes, indeed. Ages older," I added hardily.

He gave a kind of ecstatic groan. "Then I've got to take them up right away."

I couldn't but admire such gallantry. "All right, if you will. But you've really been on the wrong side of the Tiber for the Pelasgians. The best of their Cyclopean doings are beyond the Alban hills, on the way to Naples. The Pelasgians are harder to understand, but lots easier to get at."

"Praise Heaven for that!" muttered Trench, glancing down at his worn boots and his lacerated hands.

"Yes, indeed," I encouraged him; "*they* were obliging enough to build near the railroad and the highway. You can get to Alatri or Ferentino with no trouble at all."

"Thank you, Gilmore," he said with feeling. "I'll start off to-morrow—well, no, not to-morrow"—here he worked his shoulder-blades with a grimace of pain—"but before the week is out. Will you go with me?"

"O Trench, Trench, Waldo Trench!" I exclaimed, laughing.

When next I called on Mrs. Pritchard, three days later, Elizabeth Payne asked me how we had happened to overlook the Pelasgian Museum.

"There is no such thing," I returned bluntly. "The Pelasgians don't come to us; we have to go to them."

But I laughed no more.

IX

"Now, see here," said Madeline Pritchard decidedly, "we're not going to let Mr. Trench go off all by himself to any more of those lonesome places."

"He isn't going all by himself," I returned. "He's going with me."

"He's going with *us*," pronounced Mrs. Pritchard in the tone of finality. "And so are you. In the auto."

"I, too? But—Serafino——"

A cloud passed over the good lady's handsome and genial face.

"We are losing him," she said sadly. "Florence is too alluring, or my general oddity has lost its charm, or something equally as bad has happened——"

"'Equally as bad!' O Aunt Madeline!" chided her niece.

"So that if we are to be driven to Ferentino you will have to drive us, Mr. Gilmore."

"Very well," I replied. "At what hour does the Aurelia depart?"

"The Aur——? Oh, I forget; the dear old Serafina is a thing of the past. Be here at nine."

We reached Ferentino by noon, and killed nobody on the way.

"Well, well," said Mrs. Pritchard, as we toiled and sputtered up the last incline, "this *is* great! No more Corneto for me; give me the sky and the hill-tops every time!"

Meanwhile Trench and Elizabeth Payne were standing up, side by side, to catch a first view of things Cyclopean.

He had brought the patched-up *kylix* and given it to her just before we started out. He had offered it without enthusiasm and she had received it with only the most conventional signs of interest. Etruria was dead.

We grandly ignored the double arches of the Porta Casamari, for they looked as if they were merely Roman. As for the various marbles and mosaics of the cathedral, we never gave them a thought. We found our complete account in the ponderous polygonal walls of the narrow Porta Sanguinaria. Trench was in a state of exaltation, and Madeline Pritchard cried out loudly over such massiveness and such antiquity.

"And I thought I had seen everything!" she exclaimed. "O Mr. Trench, the deepest gratitude of a world-weary old woman is yours! Now, Bessie, your camera."

"Yes," said I; "the camera. Walls such as these are the only things the Pelasgians have left us. How would they do in a museum, eh?"

Obedient Bessie reached down under the seat for the instrument. It was easy to see that those old walls had kindled in her the most burning interest, and that she was panting to bring her little art into its fullest play. She felt about for a moment; then she straightened up.

"I've—I've forgotten it, aunt!" she murmured remorsefully.

"Bessie Payne!" exclaimed Mrs. Pritchard, in the most massive of Pelasgian accents.

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"I've forgotten it!" the poor girl murmured again, and turned her eyes, full of pitiful self-reproach, on—Trench.

Trench, to do him justice, put on no "side." He thanked her heartily for her good intentions and consoled her manfully for their frustration. Having now only our own eyes to depend upon, all four of us stared as hard as we could, and then put ourselves in motion for Alatri, where bigger walls and broader gateways had been awaiting us for some three thousand years.

"Aren't we almost reaching the end?" I asked Mrs. Pritchard, as we whizzed past Anagni, on the way home.

"There are only a few more old things left," she returned humorously. "*I* sha'n't mention any of them. Or," I thought I heard her add under her breath, "shall I, and bring this wild-goose chase to an end?"

X

Our little party presently dissolved once more. I heard that the ladies, having engaged a new chauffeur, had moved on to Naples, and I imagined Trench as having returned to further explorations among the Volscian hills.

Though Rome was thinning, I lingered a few days for the sake of an interesting Tuscan countess, a commensal of Mrs. Pritchard's at the Bristol.

"I have often wondered," this friend observed to me one afternoon, "how your American ladies contrive to do so much travelling without maids."

"That *is* a question, isn't it?"

"But I am on the way to answer it."

"Yes?"

"They borrow maids from us."

Then I heard how her Nencina, a week before, had asked for a day's leave to visit an old aunt who was ill at Frascati; and how diligent inquiry, immediately made, had failed to disclose the existence of any aunt whatsoever.

"Then Nencina wept and confessed that a Miss Payne—your Miss Payne——"

"My Miss Payne!"

"Had asked her company on the train as far as Frascati, to visit the villas. 'Did you go any farther than Frascati?' I was inspired to ask. Yes, the two had gone several miles beyond, to a town my Nencina had never heard of, she said. 'What for?' I demanded. And she wouldn't, or couldn't tell me. Your Miss Payne, it appears, acted just as all foreign tourists act, and there the account ended. Except that she gave Nencina ten *lire* for her trouble and told her to keep it perfectly clear in her mind that they had spent the day among the Frascati villas. I have plied the girl in vain——"

"No doubt you have plied her!" I muttered between my teeth.

"But nothing could I learn about the motives of your singular young compatriot. By the way, she left a book behind her—a very heavy one."

"Forgotten, doubtless." Forgetfulness seemed growing upon the poor girl. "What was it called?"

"'The Pelasgic Peoples.' The volume seemed quite new."

"Ah, well," I observed blandly, "we Anglo-Saxons are a race of eccentrics, and Italy seems to bring all our eccentricity out."

And no further satisfaction did my hostess receive, though I was glad enough of the hint she had unwittingly given me.

In due course I followed the general movement southward to Naples. On my first afternoon I sallied forth to enjoy the brilliant *corso* along the water-front of the Villa Nazionale. A grandiose motor-car was attempting to accommodate itself to the slower pace of the many carriages that swarmed over the wide road-bed. Just as it came abreast of me a familiar voice gave a word of command.

"Stop, Giuliano!"

And an instant later, Mrs. Pritchard, at whose side sat Elizabeth Payne, was inviting me to mount to the vacant place beside her newest chauffeur.

"Giuliana is trying to hold her own in this gay throng, and we need your help."

"It is a transplanted Rome," I said. "I have seen dozens of familiar faces already."

"We miss one," declared Mrs. Pritchard bluntly. Elizabeth Payne—not merely, I hope, to cover her confusion—leaned forward and greeted me with an elaborate prettiness.

"Everybody who ought to be present will doubtless appear," I said, to reward her.

"O prophet!" exclaimed her aunt, and pointed to a self-absorbed figure strolling along the edge of the drive, not fifty feet from us—Trench, of course, and no other.

Mrs. Pritchard caught up Trench as easi-

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ly as she had caught up me. Giuliana drew a little aside from the pressing throng of vehicles, and Trench was encouraged to give an account of his recent peregrinations. Mrs. Pritchard asked directly about everything she wanted to know, and Elizabeth Payne's speaking brown eyes seconded her with a most becoming attention.

This time Trench's boots were whole and his hands showed none of the scars of battle. There had been no repetition of earlier hardships. He was, in fact, quite presentable, and the masterful owner of the machine at once made him a part of the *corso*, just as she had done with me.

"You may go back to the hotel, Giuliano." The new chauffeur, a swarthy, thickset man, was no second Serafino, no ingratiating, indispensable Tuscan. "Mr. Gilmore, you may have Giuliano's place, and Waldo Trench may take yours."

Trench, from his new post, told us of his recent tour. In due course he had seen Cori and Norba and Segni and the rest of them. He now knew as much about the Cyclopean builders among the Volscian hills (whom, adopting the newest jargon, he called "Italioti") as anybody can know—which is very little, at best.

"You feel repaid?" asked Mrs. Pritchard kindly but keenly.

"Ye-es," began Trench.

"No, you don't," she retorted instantly. "You're keeping something back. Out with it!"

"Well," responded Trench slowly, "I have just been talking with one of the professors at the museum, and he tells me of some prehistoric things off in a remote corner of Sicily, the work of rock-dwellers called Sikelians or Sicanians, things even older than——"

"I've never heard of either of those tribes," declared Mrs. Pritchard loudly and with extraordinary promptness; "and neither, I'm sure, have any of the rest of us. And when it comes to something that Mr. Gilmore and I haven't heard of, it's time to stop."

"But I *have* heard of——" I began.

"Aurelius Gilmore," she interrupted with great energy, "get Serafina—I mean, Giuliana—out of this crowd at once. Drive straight west toward Posilipo. We'll settle this there."

"But I have heard of both the Sikelians and the Sicanians," I insisted, as I wrenched the car out of the press and started for the less frequented suburban road. "The distinction between them is an important one and well worthy the best endeavors of an ambitious young *savant*." I hope I pronounced the word "*savant*" with no sarcastic intonation.

"*Avanti!*" Mrs. Pritchard merely cried, as she had so often done with Serafino.

In three minutes we were climbing the hill of Posilipo, and the Bay, in all its breadth and beauty, was spreading itself before us.

"Look at that!" cried Madeline K. Pritchard, sweeping her arm over the wide prospect and directly addressing Trench. "How much of charm and interest before our very eyes! Why scour the world, why poke among the prehistoric ages? Why grow old before our time? Why miss a hundred fine things immediately about us for the sake of some single thing away off in the dim distance? We will trundle you to Pompeii, Mr. Trench"—a dab at the panorama—"or to Sorrento"—another dab—"or even to Pæstum"—with a slower and steadier pointing toward the most dimly blue of all the circumjacent peaks: "Pæstum, for choice, since we have given due attention to everybody save the Greeks. But I cannot promise you our co-operation in Sicily."

And then the ruthless lady invited us to dinner.

"Come to the hotel at seven, both of you. We will arrange some excursion for tomorrow. And Bessie, Mr. Trench, has a little gift to present you."

Elizabeth Payne, with a look of imperilled maiden modesty, placed a protesting hand on her aunt's plump arm. Trench, whose eyes were already wide open, now opened them still wider; and for the first time there was "speculation" in them. A man less innocent or less self-absorbed would have begun to speculate before.

XI

"Now, Bessie," said Mrs. Pritchard, as soon as we had left *table d'hôte* for her own *salottino*. "It's got to be done one time or another," I thought I heard her add in an undertone.

The girl, blushing rather prettily, rose with some hesitancy, or an appropriate

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Drawn by James Montgomery Flagg.

"Ancient fiddlesticks!" she pronounced gayly.—Page 233.

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affectation of hesitancy, and stepped toward a writing-desk.

"You may give it to him yourself," said the elder lady generously; and Trench was presently holding in his hand a nice enough little photograph album—a souvenir, as Mrs. Pritchard was at hand to put it, of their various journeyings together. "Bessie herself took every one of them," she finished.

Under the circumstances a prompt review of the entire series was little less than obligatory, and we spent the ensuing quarter of an hour in reliving the various excursions, archæological and other, of the past few months.

"That's all," said Elizabeth Payne, when we seemed close to the back cover.

"Not quite," archly declared her aunt, who had kept pace with every picture. "I think there's one more—just one."

"Let's have it," said Trench, with a touch of hoarse brusqueness that may have betokened either extreme embarrassment or a sudden long-delayed access of feeling.

We turned the leaf, and there it was—the Porta Sanguinaria at Ferentino.

"It isn't as wide as some of those other arches," said Mrs. Pritchard distinctly, "but it is wide enough for two to pass through."

If ever Innocence were bold, it was when Madeline K. Pritchard spoke these words.

"Well, that *is* the last," she said, turning away, and I discreetly followed her example.

In the wide embrasure of the open window I suggested to her—discreetly or not, as others may decide—that this last photograph permitted one to surmise a second visit to Ferentino.

"Possibly," she returned, with careless buoyancy. And then: "My dear Mr. Gilmore, I am not blind, I am not ignorant; and twenty francs, well bestowed, will often add considerable to what one may know already."

She turned back into the room, where the album continued to preserve a status that neither of the young pair dared to change, leaving me with the painful picture of a poor serving-maid doubly, trebly corrupted.

"I think we will make it Pæstum," she announced presently; and Pæstum, under her forceful direction, it became.

At two o'clock the next afternoon Mrs. Pritchard and I were seated at the base of the Temple of Neptune. Monte Chianiello and its mates looked composedly down upon us, and the blue sea lay neglected in the distance. Behind the car a superflous but exigent "guide" was consoling himself with the remains of the luncheon; and Trench and Elizabeth Payne had wandered off, in intimate converse, in the direction of the Basilica.

"Well," said I, luxuriously fitting my back into a fluting of one of those giant columns, "antiquity still rules."

"Antiquities," rejoined my companion, "are all very well if they can be put to a modern use. But when I see Inexperience losing itself in the murky labyrinth of the past——"

"The 'murky labyrinth of the past' is good. May I use it?"

"Certainly. Why, then I feel like lending a hand to lead it back to the light of the present day."

"You will probably prevail," I observed, but not too bitterly.

"That young man!" she went on; "such amazing vigor, such exhaustless driving-power, such astonishing singleness of purpose! And all, at present, so misapplied. Think what such qualities are going to effect for him on those farms and in the civic life of his new commonwealth!"

"You find him single-minded, eh? I should say 'simple-minded,' or 'myriad-minded,' or——"

"Well, whether single, simple, or myriad, I bank strong on the thorough-going fellow who can drive straight to the point."

There was a sound behind us. The two young people were approaching through the opposite colonnade, each with an illumined countenance that conveyed one and the same declaration. Trench had come to the point.

"It has happened," murmured Madeline Pritchard devoutly.

"Let's render thanks, if thanks are due," said I.

"Due—and overdue," said she.

Trench approached with a buoyant gayety that seemed the full assertion of his ultimate self.

"I have decided to give up the Sicilians," he said. "I have found curtain beyond

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Drawn by James Montgomery Flagg.

The two young people were approaching.—Page 246.

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curtain. One can't go on forever. One must stop somewhere."

"You have stopped at a very good place," said Mrs. Pritchard. "Another month would have made a gray-beard of you."

"We have resolved to remain modern," said Elizabeth Payne, with a happy reflection of Trench's own manner. "We have returned to the present era and mean to stay there."

Mrs. Pritchard rose and gave each of them a hand. "Welcome back, my dear children, to the twentieth century, after your long jaunt through time and space."

"A happy omen," said I, rising also and repeating her action, "that you should emerge upon the modern age through these portentous pillars of Pæstum."

"A lovely phrase—whatever it means," breathed Mrs. Pritchard. "Don't lose it."

"Congratulate us," said Trench ebulliently, "upon our entry into our new State."

"New?" repeated Mrs. Pritchard. "One of the oldest in the world!"

Trench gave us another of those wide looks. "I mean the State of Oklahoma."

Mrs. Pritchard laughed. "I mean the state of matrimony."

"You have combined them," said I, with an indulgent smile that set the past aside and forgave everything in it. "I trust you will prosper in both."

WANDERLIED

By Marie van Vorst

Oh, when shall I come home again—
My darling, tell me true?
To wander east, to wander west's a dreary thing to do!
See summer burn the changing leaves
Beneath the homeland sky,
White winter fold familiar eaves—
Oh, when shall I!

The rose shall tinge the coverts,
And the field-bird leave her nest,
And autumn gather golden grain against her glowing breast;
The Word shall find the snow-banned,
And the wanderer back shall fly,
And aliens seek their native land—
Oh when shall I?

The axes strike the yielding pine,
The beams swing up of yew:
To build a house for love and rest's a happy thing to do!
A feathered pair have swung their nest,
All secret, safe, and high,
And everyone finds home and rest—
Oh, when shall I!

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THE POINT OF VIEW

A GENERATION ago, those of our leading minds which combined brightness with "natural piety" were intent upon the reconciliation of science with religion. At present some of those minds seem impressed with the desirableness of reconciling science with "culture." The President of Columbia not so long ago openly took the peace-path as a reconciler, and expressed a faith that "science," meaning physical science, might come to be as potent an agency of "culture" as what are distinctly known as the humanities. The humanities we may assume to be the current equivalent for the "seven liberal arts," which, under their various transformations, have continued since the time of Abelard to dominate "liberal education," "though perhaps," as Carlyle once remarked, "they are obsolete enough even yet for some of us." And the faithful fulfilment of the curriculum consequent upon the modern modification of them does without question produce a cultivated man in the accepted sense of that term. Now natural science, however faithfully pursued, does not obviously tend to the same result. The common stock of mere information which the accepted curriculum imparts and assumes is assuredly acquired in the study and as assuredly not in the laboratory. And a heavy burden of proof weighs down the reconciler who paraphrases and perverts Ovid to the extent of maintaining that faithfully to have pursued experimental "natural philosophy" softens the manners nor suffers to be rude; which nevertheless was the thesis of the discourse in question.

Science as "Culture"

We all know pretty well what are the results of a purely technical or "technological" education. Most of us have had opportunities of estimating its human products. The oldest of the technical schools, for half a century or more the only one in this country, is the Military Academy. Baron Steuben is sometimes referred to as the father of the Military Academy, because he sketched a curriculum of such an institution. But that it was by no means the West Point we know is evident enough. The ex-officer of the great Frederick had provided, among other things, for a chair of belles-lettres and a chair of architecture, two unquestionably "humanizing" agencies. But when the academy came actually to be founded, these provisions were quite ruthlessly stricken out, and nothing left in but what directly "drove at practice." The result is that the West Pointer learns how to study, learns how to think straight, and becomes a highly efficient military machine; so highly efficient that many are coming to think it is wasting him to make him a subaltern of the line. He is a "trained" man, he is an educated man with reservations. But nobody would think of calling him a "cultivated" man. It is well looked out for that he gets no time for "collateral reading" while he is undergoing his quadrennial ordeal. When he has escaped it, he is apt to emerge with an extreme aversion for reading, collateral or other. Those West Pointers, and they are many, who do acquire culture, acquire it by "the strong propensity of nature" and rather in spite of their specific "education."

There is in truth no evidence that for their specific purpose of giving "the education of a gentleman" there is any effective substitute for the old-fashioned humanities. Matthew Arnold, quite justifiably from his point of view, holds up to odium the new-fashioned system which put in possession of certain ologies a student whom it did not prevent from paraphrasing

> Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased?

by

> Can you not wait upon the lunatic?

And it has been remarked that there is an actual university president in these United States who has specialized in science with

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distinguished success, but who, in a published address, showed himself unaware that it was Byron who wrote the "Isles of Greece." The evidence thus far is that science is science and culture is culture, that neither has anything to do with the other, and that neither can be made to "rub off" on the other.

The Tour by Trolley

TO city dwellers the trolley is known as a rapid and convenient method of getting between their places of business and their places of residence. The workers for daily wages among them know it also as a means of Sunday excursion, when the hoodlums will permit. A still more beneficent use is that which enables the dwellers in tenement houses, when the nights are intolerable at home, to take themselves and their sick young abroad in the dark, with the certainty of some movement of air caused by the movement of the machine itself.

But there is another use of the trolley for pleasure which is only just now beginning to be appreciated, and which is still in its infancy, and that is as a means of taking little tours at a cheap rate in the holiday season. Not such very little tours, either. One may go, it appears, from New York to Boston by trolley. It is open to any hardy pioneer to take that trip and report its results in a form which could hardly fail to be available for publication if he knew how to write and also how and at what to aim a camera. But less ambitious tours are open to everybody who can afford to take a holiday in the country at all. The suburban trolley, when one once gets beyond the radius of the Sunday excursionist, may become a pleasure vehicle, or land-yacht. There is even a trolley map of eastern New Jersey published by a wise corporation for the attraction of makers of small tours. Other wise corporations have found it remunerative to establish summer orchestras at their suburban termini, in order to supply the excursionists with a goal.

But the true uses of the trolley for pleasure are in the rural, not the suburban, regions. New England is overspread with a reticulation of trolleys which adds immeasurably to the joys of the holiday-maker within its borders. The Yankee maintains his old preeminence in the promptitude of his adoption and adaption of new mechanical devices. And he is singularly favored in the adoption of this device by the lie of his native land. By a merciful dispensation of providence, akin to that whereby great rivers are made to flow by great cities, it is in the bold and picturesque regions that the running of trolleys is cheapest. "From every mountain side" flow streams which were permitted to run unchecked and unharnessed during the age of steam, only to be brought into subjection and service again at the beginning of the Electrical Age. Water powers no longer run to waste in New England. The bolder and hillier the country, and by consequence the more interesting to the tourist, the more frequent the sources of power, the "stations" from which it may be drawn with economy. For less than the railroad fare one may travel with none of the nuisances of railroad travel. In the fervent heats of August a trustworthy and refreshing ten-knot breeze is made for the comfort of "MM. les Voyageurs" by the motion of their bark, a breeze readily tempered by wraps in the cool of the golden October. The hum of the trolley car is not, like the clatter of the train, prohibitory of the enjoyment of conversation. There is no dust; there are no cinders. "The side lights of a car in motion" are replaced by a wide outlook and look 'round. What philosopher on a trolley car among the New England hills can envy the sluggish "buggy" which he passes, or the automobile, vain for safety, which passes him? He has no demoniac and speed-bug-bitten chauffeur to chide, no fear of a disabling accident with maddening delay and looming bill for repairs. Cheerfully irresponsible for everything but his road money of two cents a mile, or most likely less, he snaps his fingers at the black care which sits behind the horseman and the automobilist. The automobilist, spreading terror in his van, and stench, dust, and devastation in his wake, has no terrors for the tourist by trolley, who can sing "vacuus" before and behind him, travelling at a modest average of ten or twelve miles an hour, fast enough to give an exhilarating sense of motion, but not so fast as to prevent him from really imbibing the scenery and extracting its healing uses. So why should he, in pleasant weather and with "a good tavern" as his goal, envy any son of Adam?

Perhaps no better advice could be given to the holiday-maker, on pleasure bent and of a frugal mind, than to establish himself at a trolley-centre, in the heart of a picturesque

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and therefore trolleyiferous region, and thence radiate in excursions say of from thirty to fifty moderate diurnal miles, migrating, if possible by trolley, to another like point of centrifugal departure when he believes himself to have exhausted the scenic resources of the first.

IS the English reserve of which we hear so much that we try to escape from the phrase as from a condemning tag in reality a better envelope for ideal friendship than the warmer manner, the readier jest, the more expansive if not more genial intercourse, the more open minds of our compatriots? It is certainly as impossible to find the average friend as it is the average man, whom we have long acknowledged to be non-existent. For a little space we all, more or less, took refuge in the "typical" man or woman, but the individualist recently has scented offence in this also, and with much earnest emphasis it is impressed upon us that there is no typical human being. Tennyson is quite wrong; no longer can we say in praise or dispraise of Nature:

Friendship Here and There

> So careful of the type she seems,
> So careless of the single life.

But with all proper precautionary hedging we may, I think, find a sort of basis of comparison in the manifold revelations of friendship offered in the biographies of the two countries. We hardly need to refer to the great friendships, as of Tennyson and Arthur Hallam, William Morris and Burne-Jones, of a day hardly past, nor at all to those of generations earlier; they must be only occasional in any lands, as was Montaigne's for La Boetie. But in the life of Huxley, in that of John Richard Green, of Benjamin Jowett, of George Eliot, is there not displayed a richness of satisfaction not easily paralleled in our own more exuberant nation? When we think of Fitzgerald, with his "friendships which were like loves," and very much more ardent than his own matrimonial experience of love, when we recall Thackeray's devotion to his friends, the happy fruit of which appears in the Brookfield Letters, and remember that with these beloved friends he placed "dear old Fitz," we wonder where among the lives of American men of letters we may look to find their like.

Emerson early proclaimed for himself limits to the intimacy of friendship, in which perhaps he penetratingly, if unconciously, interpreted his fellow-countrymen. Nowhere can one turn to an ideal of friendship more exalted, nowhere find depicted nobler uses for that gift of the gods; and yet in the cool idealization of a relationship in which there is room for more than the ideal, he half recognized a fervor he could not feel, though he qualified with a hesitating "perhaps" his statement that he had "never known so high a fellowship as others." The attributes in him that aroused oftenest in his companions the sentiment of reverence may have kept him free from the "touching and clawing" he deprecated, but it also lent to him a sort of remoteness. It is, however, with a little bewilderment not unmixed with something very like disdain that we find toward him in Carlyle a certain grudging good opinion, while on Froude Carlyle lavishes the warmth denied the greater man and truer friend.

That the love of friends, the feeling and the expression, are potent in numberless Americans is not to be questioned, but the beauty of the bond, the touching dependence that led Green's friends to exile themselves with him for the last sad, almost inarticulate days, the intimacy of communication that marks in a striking degree the correspondence offered in many biographies of Englishmen, seem hardly to be found in similar works here. Where can we learn of such a group of college boys carrying into maturity the ardor of their youthful friendships as is revealed to us in the "Cambridge Apostles"? Have we hurried away from companionship lest it take too much time? After all, friendship is usually of leisurely growth. We have learned much of good living, of good sport, of how to build houses and estates from our brothers across the sea: must we learn from them the secret of the highest of all satisfactions, as Emerson tells us that friendship is?

THERE would certainly appear to be no new views whatever that anybody could advance on the subject of personal service; and yet a chance opinion expressed within a short time by two friends of mine, strangers to each other and neither knowing of the other's ideas, starts a quite fresh line of thought. One of these persons was a much-travelled Englishman, a man of good birth, and a priest of the Church of England; the other was a

As to Body-Servants

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very cultivated woman, who had been married and a mother, had seen and known prosperity and also its reverse. Both remarked that but for association with other servants they would not at all mind being servants themselves. The English clergyman, in fact, declared that, provided one had the right sort of man to serve, he could not see why being a body-servant should not be a life desirable rather than otherwise. Bernard Shaw would naturally recognize in this the true Briton; as when he makes Britannus say in "Cæsar and Cleopatra" that only since he has been Cæsar's slave has he known freedom. And Bernard Shaw naturally would not be in sympathy with the sentiment. But when one has circled the circumference of a good many ideas it does not seem to one perhaps that that independence of which Shaw is so fond is, after all, a thing to be more wished for than all others. It would be quite in Shaw's line to perceive that one can really be more independent personally when one is serving than when one is being served. And, in fact, he has perceived this on occasion also.

With the practical extinction of the race of good servants and the diminution in the supply of any sort of servants (those recent statistics about the falling off in the number of French *bonnes*—those hearty, sensible creatures on whom one would longest have pinned one's faith—are the most appalling), our theorizers have been saying that we should be reduced to employing Asiatics, or to going quite without service in the strictly personal sense. The problem, according to lecturers and essayists on sociological topics, is to be entirely solved by institutionalism. I think they are leaving out of account some permanent tendencies of human nature. Cooking done at central kitchens, housemaids' work supplied by the hour, sanitary dust-removing by the job, may be satisfactory changes—some of them are very satisfactory—yet there remains a something in service which cannot be contracted for on the totally impersonal principle. Of course, men and women could outgrow altogether the conception of personal service. This (to bring him forward again) so modern a person as Mr. Shaw would prognosticate. His true Overmen would as lief black their own boots as not. And indeed there is no objection. But it is not alone a question of not objecting. The Overman must also have the time. There are, in a full and complex life, an infinity of tasks more minute and, in themselves, inconsequential than blacking boots, which could not be intrusted to employees of the most up-to-date domestic agencies without time-and-nerve-consuming explanations; tasks which a silent, ever-present intelligence, working shadow-like in the background, divining answers without putting questions, alone can execute to the immeasurable enfranchisement of the busy man.

While we hear that soon there are to be no more servants, everywhere, from the heads of the big corporations down, there goes up the cry for the faithful man—the man who is willing to be faithful in secret, and without putting posies in his own hat. Naturally, while every man thinks that he is as much entitled to the posies as the other man, being faithful in secret will not present itself as a popular occupation. Yet it is possible that when perfect equality of everybody to everybody else has been absolutely established the desire to prove it will seem uninteresting and superfluous. Then there might be good servants again. And would it not be a whimsical thought that the occupation should be rather sought for than not by cultivated persons who had somewhat lost interest in life perhaps on their own account, but were still vicariously interested in the activities of others, and, besides, content to earn their livelihood obscurely?

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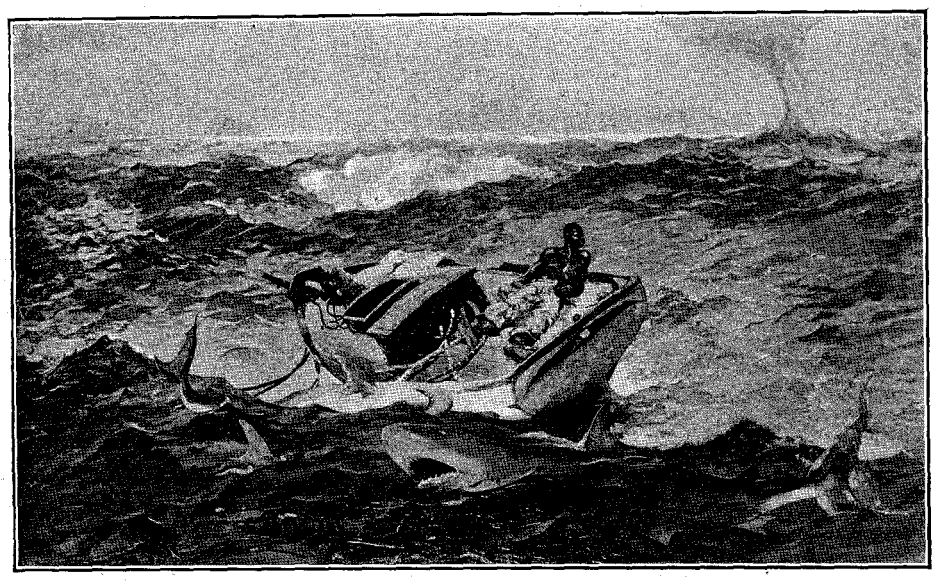
THE FIELD OF ART



"The Gulf Stream," by Winslow Homer.
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WORKS BY LIVING AMERICAN PAINTERS IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

MR. FRANK FOWLER'S "hint" which any expression of the mind of man through the medium of art may give "of the manners and usages of an age"* may possibly be pursued even in our own, present, day. In continuance of his theme we may examine the collection of works by living American painters in the Metropolitan Museum, and find that, small as it is, it is yet of sufficient importance to give, say, to the intelligent foreigner, a fair, general notion of the present state and tendencies of the art, and even of the progress, or, at least, of the movement, it has made within the memory of the living. In its general direction this movement appears to have been a search, through varied and devious ways, for technical perfection in brush work—so insistent a quest that most other things formerly held of great importance in the art of painting have been abandoned, temporarily at least. This has been said before.

It is possible that the persistence of this quest—in which, of course, the untechnical public could have but little interest—has had much to do with that general indifference to the particular wares thus turned out, which has long been matter of general knowledge. At the present moment, however, there are declared to be signs of a greater consideration extended at home to this contemporary school of painting; and this wider interest and better appreciation may have been brought about by certain developments on both sides. The living painters have been broadening their humanities, as it were, and in some notable cases tempering their methods without impairing the purport of their work; the public have been overcoming certain preju-

*See article in THE FIELD OF ART, July, 1907.

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dices. Both of those important factors, the public museum and the private collector, have appeared in this movement; and the field covered by their appreciation and purchases has been very reasonably wide, including not only those aspects of portrait and genre painting which might be expected to appeal more strongly to a local or provincial taste, but also the wider range of imaginative or synthetic art. Credit for the initiation of this practical appreciation has been given by some of the painters benefited to the Western part of the country rather than the Eastern—the Western, where there is considered to be more civic pride, less dependence upon the traditions of the Old World, and greater self-assertion, than in the East. It has even been urged that the Western museums might profit by the errors of the Eastern institutions, and instead of covering their walls with such examples of the art of Europe as opportunity may throw in their way, frequently at very heavy cost, may by judicious selection secure collections of examples of the contemporary national art which will at once be more fitting and will increase in value and importance, and even in money value.

All the important art museums of the country have given signs of this greater interest; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, at Washington, the Chicago Art Institute, the great Carnegie Institute of Pittsburg, the Albright Art Gallery of Buffalo, the Boston Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of New York. The thirty-fifth annual report of the trustees of the latter, for the year ending December 31, 1904, stated that "among the many directions in which extension of our collections are desirable is one which has peculiar claim upon our interest and patriotism, that is, the art of our country." In the report of the following year it was announced that an appeal had been made in this particular to the generosity of private citizens, and that this appeal had met with "a substantial response." There had been added to the museum's collection since the publication of the report of 1904 eight paintings by American artists, and the recent gift of Mr. George A. Hearn included twelve pictures by ten different artists besides an endowment of over $125,000, the income of which was to be applied exclusively to the purchase of contemporary American paintings. A tentative list of some of the best known American painters who were either not represented at all in the museum's collection or inadequately represented had been prepared, and also a similar list of American sculptors. The museum's *Bulletin* for September, 1906, gave the complete list of American paintings in the institution, three hundred and eleven in all, of which three hundred were its own property; of these one hundred and eighty-six were on public exhibition. The majority of these were, naturally, by deceased artists. In addition to Mr. Hearn's gift and his still more munificent endowment, the trustees of the museum announce the bequest of the late Mrs. Amelia B. Lazarus, consisting of $20,000, "to be applied, with all interest which may accrue, to the purchase of works of art by American artists, and of a part of her own collection, consisting of nine pictures." This bequest is in line with the discriminating interest manifested in American art by this lady, as exemplified by the gift by herself and daughter, Miss Emilie Lazarus, of the sum of $24,000 for the establishment of the fund known as "The Jacob H. Lazarus Travelling Scholarship Fund." Still another addition to the museum's American paintings is the recent gift by the late Thomas P. Salter of four canvases by R. S. Gifford, David Johnson, H. Bolton Jones, and William L. Brown, among eighteen paintings of various schools, all of which have been on exhibition in the museum as loans since 1892.

The department of contemporary portrait painting is represented in the museum by few canvases, but all of these, fortunately, are of importance. Of those by living artists, Mr. Sargent has at present, counting recent loans, five good examples: the portrait of Mr Marquand of 1897; that of Mr. Chase, presented by the latter's pupils in 1905, and of which the author himself asked apprehensively if it were *too* dramatic; and, of those temporarily in the galleries, the aggressively alert and lifelike lady in grayish purples, seated on the edge of her white and gold chair, hands on hips, head forward, the beautiful tones of blues and grays in the background relieving the warm tints of the face; and the two most recent loans, the spirited first study of the head of Edwin Booth for the portrait in the Players' Club, and the carefully painted small portrait of Robert Louis Stevenson, at Bournemouth, about 1887, seated at length in his wicker chair, the face smooth and youthful, fresh in color, the light of speculation in the eyes, the very long fingers holding the cigarette. Mr. Chase's portrait of a young lady

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in black, presented by Mrs. Chase in 1891, may be said to be of more interest than his recent contributions; in the same year the museum received, from Mrs. Milbank, John W. Alexander's striking presentation of the ruddy face and white hair of Walt Whitman set in a misty gray atmosphere. Mr. Fowler's recent article has dealt largely with the work of the early portrait painters and of some more recent, but not living. Of those who, happily, still live, Mr. Seymour J. Guy is represented by his careful portrait of the artist Elliott, who died in 1868. This painting also was presented to the museum by a lady, Mrs. Robert W. de Forest, in 1903.

Of those canvases which show the sound training of the European schools, leaving the painter sufficiently cosmopolitan, one of the most important is Dannat's Spanish "Quartette," presented by Mrs. Dannat in 1886. In the same year a number of gentlemen gave the museum Charles F. Ulrich's "Glass Blowers of Murano," which had just received a prize of $2,500 at the competitive exhibition of the American Art Association and was considered to be a brilliant demonstration of the new national school. As this was painted under German influences, Walter Gay's "Fileuses" may be said to be French, Mr. Millet's "Cosy Corner" English, and Mr. Magrath's "On the Old Sod" Irish; but nothing could be much less profitable than these searchings of foreign origins in American results. Of those pictures which, apparently at least, are sufficiently national there are a number of examples; all the landscapes practically, including works by Winslow Homer, Whittredge, Edward Gay, Horatio Walker, Tryon, Dessar, Ranger, Bunce, Shurtleff, Parton, Bolton Jones, Daingerfield, Charles H. Davis, Coffin, Bogert, Charles H. Miller, and Ballard Williams, and the curious and beautiful study of a tree-bole by Mr. La Farge, another gift from Mr. Hearn. Also, Mr. Maynard's mermaids disporting in summer seas, Thomas Eakins's "Chess Players," two or three cattle pieces, etc., etc.

Notwithstanding the above long list of landscape painters, the museum's collections do not yet include any representatives of the somewhat more unconventional school which seeks greater vibration and luminousness by broken touches of color, the modern modification of the impressionists' technical innovations, which are needed to complete its

"The Green Bodice," by Julian Alden Weir.
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presentation. In the figure pieces also there are no violent departures from academic methods, such as may be encountered in the current exhibitions. With a few exceptions the differences between the older and the newer works of these contemporaries may be found in the themes proposed, the conceptions of things suitable for their art, rather than in the actual brush work.

Such courageous attempts to paint unpaintable things as the blinding white light

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of an iron furnace in Prof. John F. Weir's "Forging the Shaft," may be said to be out of fashion; also the carefully built-up, ingenious, and learned composition of the foreign schools, as Mosler's "Wedding Feast in Brittany"; even the mild sentiment, the less academical arrangement of Mr. Turner's presentation of the wedding procession of John Alden, with Priscilla mounted in state on the peaceable white bull. These large genre and historical compositions are now left to the mural painters, who find their problems somewhat simplified by the decorative necessity of keeping everything more or less on one plane. Among these older pictures we find one of the most striking examples of an original note, of the mysterious possibilities of suggestion, rendered in this case by color and tone rather than by the design, in Mr. Vedder's "African Sentinel" of 1865. His "Question of the Sphinx," a recent loan, however, painted in grays, does not seem to rise much above the triviality of the theme. In his deep concern for the preservation of the artistic unities, it would seem that the contemporary painter was afraid to go too far afield, or to commit himself as hardily as did his predecessors. With greater knowledge, perhaps, has come greater discretion. He does not seek the full expression of a real artistic idea, built up of many things; very frequently he is content with the merest suggestion of it; not infrequently he is apparently content with the technical rendering of an outer aspect only.

A number of pictures from Mr. Hearn's recent gift are, at this writing (May, 1907) hung in a group on the end wall of one of the museum's smaller galleries, well lit, where they may be considered with interest not only because of their intrinsic merit but also as a selection, as an intelligent attempt to discriminate. As they are all easel paintings, of a portable size, there are no large decorative panels, no great landscape compositions, no full-length, life-size portraits. In the centre hangs Mr. Thayer's well-known "Young Woman," the most elusive, the most of a work of the imagination, of the figure pieces; at one end, Alden Weir's "Green Bodice" (see illustration, p. 255), and at the other, Mr. Benson's arrangement of a lady in light and shade and green and black which he calls a portrait. All these three are half-length, life-size studies, and it can truthfully be said that between them they cover a very wide range. On either side of the center are coast scenes by Winslow Homer, "Cannon Rock" and "Searchlight, Harbor Entrance, Santiago de Cuba," somewhat less forceful, less dramatic, than is usual with him. But in his "Gulf Stream," (see illustration, p. 253), purchased from the income of the Catherine Lorillard Wolfe fund, and hung in a neighboring gallery, all the power of his virile technique, the pomp of tropical color, are invoked to give effect to his gruesome sea tragedy. On the line in Mr. Hearn's group are also, a young pioneer, standing by his canoe, by Douglas Volk, and one of Mr. Brush's familiar repetitions of his family this time smaller than usual and given at full length, in a garden. Above, hangs a half-length, life-size study of a mother and child, in black and white, by Sergeant Kendall, and landscapes by Horatio Walker, Tryon, Dessar, Ranger and Bogert in which may be found the care for atmosphere, envelope, and rendering of sentiment and mood, with which we are familiar. A large marine, somewhat grayer than is usual with him, by Gedney Bunce, has very recently been added. Mr. Daingerfield's creeping, nocturnal fog, invading the high hill-tops, is striking; Mr. Chase is represented by a small study of a seventeenth-century lady turning her white satin back upon us, and by a large one (from another donor) in the adjoining gallery, of Carmencita dancing, in an arrangement of yellows; Ballard Williams, a younger man, by two small canvases, a landscape and a "L'Allegro." Like the last-named, a return to the old-fashioned romantic school, is the big "Temple of the Winds," hung outside in the corridor, around the inner court of the building. This is by Louis Loeb, and was presented by Mr. Daniel Guggenheim, in 1905.

It will be seen that there is already a representation of the national school; there is a fuller one, indeed, than can be adequately commented upon in the space of two such articles as Mr. Fowler's and this, and many of the important names in recent American painting — Homer Martin, Eastman Johnson, Alfred Q. Collins, and others—remain for fuller notice when the collections are still more complete.

WILLIAM WALTON.

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